United Nations S/PV.4508

Security Council

Distr.: General
8 April 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4508th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 April 2002, at 10.30 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 4508th meeting, held in private on 8 April 2002, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question'.

"The President, with the consent of the Council, invited the representative of Israel to participate in the discussion of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The members of the Council and the representative of Israel had a constructive discussion."

02-32010 (E) 080402

United Nations S/PV.4509

Security Council

Distr.: General
8 April 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4509th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 April 2002, at 12.30 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 4509th meeting, held in private on 8 April 2002, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question'.

"In accordance with the rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard, the President, with the consent of the Council, invited the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the discussion.

"The members of the Council and the Permanent Observer of Palestine had a constructive discussion."

02-32028 (E) 080402

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4510th meeting

Monday, 8 April 2002, at 3.45 p.m.
New York

President:	Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zínser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

Letter dated 6 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/359).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-32100 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

Letter dated 6 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/359)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Bahrain, Canada, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and Yemen, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lancry (Israel) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Baali (Algeria), Mr. Buallay (Bahrain), Mr. Duval (Canada), Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba), Mr. Yépez Lasso (Ecuador), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Al-Kadhe (Iraq), Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Al-Hussein (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Al-Bakri (Malaysia), Mr. Bennouna (Morocco), Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman), Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan), Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar), Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Arias (Spain), Mr. Erwa (Sudan), Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia), Mr. Cengizer (Turkey) and Mr. Al-Ashtal (Yemen) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 8 April 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2002/361 and which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in the meeting of the Security Council to be held today, Monday, 8 April 2002, regarding the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question."

I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure and with previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform members of the Council and other participants that we are planning to meet until not later than 7 p.m. If there are speakers remaining on the list, we will resume the meeting tomorrow morning.

The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in response to the request contained in the letter dated 6 April 2002 from the representative of Tunisia to the United Nations, which is contained in document S/2002/359.

The first speaker inscribed on my list is the Permanent Observer of Palestine, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for responding to the request by the Arab Group to convene this meeting.

Israel, the occupying Power, continues the bloody military offensive against the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority that it began on 28 September 2000. Beginning 10 days ago, it has continuously escalated that military campaign by reoccupying the city of Ramallah and destroying and laying siege to the headquarters and office of President Arafat. Israel is using helicopters, tanks and many other kinds of weaponry in its offensive. Furthermore, it is committing war crimes and acts of State terrorism — crimes that one might find very difficult to believe

given that they are taking place in full view of the world and at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Suffice it to mention the Israeli brutality committed during attacks against refugee camps in Jenin and Balata and the old city of Nablus. After arbitrary attacks by tanks failed to produce the desired results, scores of missiles and rockets were launched by helicopter gunships against the Jenin refugee camp, an area no more than one square kilometre in size. The purpose and the result in that case were the same: to annihilate the camp and those in it. Equally ferocious and arbitrary practices are being repeated at other sites.

Israeli occupation forces have killed no fewer than 250 Palestinians and have injured scores of others. Counting the victims has become impossible in the last 10 days. Israeli forces have also prevented ambulances and medical teams from reaching the injured. Those blocked have included the International Committee of the Red Cross, staff members of which have been victims of Israel aggression. Israel has also declared many areas closed military zones and has forbidden reporters from entering them. In an effort to keep the world from seeing the new war criminals and to keep it from recalling European cities under Nazi occupation, representatives of the media have been the targets of Israeli aggression.

Israeli forces have also caused the deterioration of the humanitarian situation through their imposition of curfews and by depriving inhabitants of access to basic needs. Water and power have been cut off to vast areas. Infrastructure has been destroyed. Homes have been stormed. Mass detentions have taken place. Buildings, cars and property have been destroyed. In addition, the occupation forces continue their attacks against mosques and churches and continue to lay siege to the Church of the Nativity. Even the birthplace of Christ has not prevented attacks against our people; it will not deter these new war criminals.

The Israeli occupation forces have also committed grave violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 1949. Accordingly, we once again call for the High Contracting Parties not only to take the necessary measures to guarantee respect for the Convention in accordance with common article 1, but also to assume their duty to take the necessary legal measures to bring to trial those who have committed war crimes. We also call upon the Security Council to consider the mechanism necessary to bring this about. Until that time, we call on the High Contracting Parties — in particular on those who have laws in place regarding extra-territorial jurisdiction over war crimes — to press charges against the war criminals, prosecute them and bring them to justice.

We believe that the list should contain the name of General Shaul Mofaz, the Israeli Army Chief of Staff, who is personally responsible for many war crimes committed by his forces. To that list we would also add the names of many officers and soldiers of Israeli military units and those of helicopter pilots who have committed acts of premeditated murder against civilians on specific instances and on specific dates. We have documented such acts in 110 letters to the Security Council — letters which could be considered a record of such crimes.

Of course, responsibility for such war crimes falls on Mr. Ariel Sharon and his Government. This is an issue that can be dealt with at the appropriate time. We and our future generations will never forget what has befallen us at the hands of the Israeli side. There is no doubt that a serious stand by the international community against these crimes will help to end them and ensure that they are not repeated, not only in Palestine but throughout the world. Such a stand could help heal the painful wounds suffered by our people.

Since 29 March, the overall military attacks and the reoccupation of Palestinian cities have been taking place after the Security Council adopted its important resolution 1397 (2002). The major part of the offensive took place after the adoption of resolution 1402 (2002), and even after the adoption of resolution 1403 (2002), which called for the implementation of resolution 1402 (2002) without delay. Once again, Israel, the occupying Power, has chosen to ignore the resolutions of the Security Council. It has done so in clear defiance of the Council and in grave and ominous violation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, including Article 25. It is doing so not because of its own strength, but because it relies on the availability of the protection it needs whenever it becomes necessary to resort to Chapter VII of the Charter.

Furthermore, Israel has chosen to ignore the request made by President George Bush four days ago for a cessation of military operations and a withdrawal from recently reoccupied cities. President Bush also asked that withdrawal take place without delay. High officials later clarified that "without delay" meant "now". Israeli tanks wreaked havoc on Palestinian

cities and towns, and military operations are continuing. This arbitrariness must end now. Israel must not be treated as if it were above the law, and the members of the international community must take the necessary measures to put an end to Israeli acts of aggression and to the tragedy and suffering of our people.

The question we must ask now is how our people can trust any initiative. How can they trust the ability and will of those who promoted such initiatives to implement them so that the Palestinian people will not ultimately be compelled to submit to the desires of the Israelis?

We will try not to lose hope, although that will require more serious international action. The Palestinian leadership and President Yasser Arafat will cooperate with those who brought about these initiatives, including, of course, Secretary of State Powell when he visits the region. At the same time, we reiterate our call for an effective international presence on the ground, in particular after the destruction inflicted on the Palestinian police force and other Palestinian security forces, so that upcoming commitments can be implemented and so that we can provide the necessary protection for our people. We should also like to stress the importance of seeking a comprehensive approach to the political situation and to stress the need for the Security Council to participate in taking the necessary measures in that direction.

Our people will not give up in the face of war criminals. We will not give up our right to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with holy Jerusalem as its capital. We will not give up the dream of a just and comprehensive peace in the region. However, the necessary first step is the immediate and unconditional implementation of resolution 1402 (2002). Let us do that together. Let the Security Council adopt an additional resolution reaffirming the Council's serious commitment, and put an end to the tragic humanitarian situation on the ground.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the representative of Israel.

Mr. Lancry (Israel): Just over a week ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 1402 (2002), calling for a meaningful ceasefire, an end to all acts of terrorism and incitement, the withdrawal of Israeli troops and cooperation with American Special Envoy General Anthony Zinni in the implementation of Tenet and Mitchell. Resolution 1402 (2002) lays out a package of reciprocal steps to be carried out by both sides. Even if one does not accept that those steps are intended to be undertaken in sequence, surely one can agree that they should at least be carried out simultaneously. Israeli withdrawal, if it is not preceded by a meaningful Palestinian ceasefire, must, at the very least, be accompanied by one.

Israeli withdrawal under resolution 1402 (2002) is not supposed to occur in a vacuum, and the fact that Israel urges that such a withdrawal be accompanied by a meaningful ceasefire is not a rejection of the resolution, but a call for its faithful implementation. For its part, Israel believes that, with the direct involvement of Secretary of State Powell, the package of steps envisaged in resolution 1402 (2002), including Israel's withdrawal, can be fully implemented. To our dismay, all indicators suggest that the Palestinian side has no intention of even declaring a ceasefire, much less implementing a meaningful one.

On Friday, Special Envoy Zinni met with Chairman Arafat in his Ramallah compound and presented a bridging proposal that the Palestinian leader once again rejected. That rejection, coupled with the Palestinian leadership's steadfast refusal to take any action that might halt attacks on Israeli civilians, demonstrates that the Palestinian leadership has yet to abandon its strategic decision to use terrorism to advance its cause.

In recent weeks, Israeli forces have discovered documentary evidence of what our intelligence services have long known: the Palestinian Authority has played a central role in the support and financing of terrorist operations. Scores of documents and thousands of illegal weapons hidden in the Ramallah compound confirm in striking detail the support provided by Chairman Arafat and other high officials in the Palestinian Authority for terrorist attacks and constitute irrefutable proof of their complicity in the murder of innocent Israeli civilians. Among the items discovered were thousands of rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, mortars, mortar launchers, explosives and hand grenades, all of which the Palestinian Authority is forbidden to possess under signed agreements reached with Israel.

The documents found in Chairman Arafat's compound confirm that the Palestinian Authority financed, with international and donor funds, the

terrorist activities carried out by Fatah Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, the group responsible for nine separate terrorist attacks against Israel in the month of March alone. One document attests to the fact that the Palestinian Authority, under Chairman Arafat's signature, provided ongoing funding for the Al-Aqsa Brigades in the Bethlehem region by transferring monthly salaries to the organization's activists and funding for memorial ceremonies, posters and other materials to publicize and glorify the deeds of suicide bombers. An additional letter details an ambitious plan to build a factory for manufacturing heavy weapons. The cost to establish the factory was estimated in the document at $100,000, and operating costs were estimated at $15,000 per month. Those figures included the purchase of machines needed to process the metal required to manufacture weapons such as rockets and mortars.

These findings attest to the importance of Israel's military operations, which are being conducted in such a way as to minimize, as much as possible, any harm to Palestinian civilians. Our concerns in that regard have extended the duration of the operation, but they are both a legal and a moral necessity, and proceed from the recognition that the Palestinians are our neighbours and partners and will remain so. The majority of those killed have been Palestinian fighters who either fired on Israeli troops or were actively engaged in terrorist activity. Israel has never and will never intentionally target civilian areas. We must be careful not to accept unfounded claims to that effect as fact, as is often the case.

This morning, the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, delivered an important statement to the Israeli Parliament again expressing the wishes of all the citizens of Israel to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the conflict with our Palestinian neighbours. Prime Minister Sharon welcomed the fact that such an important Arab leader as Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has, for the first time, acknowledged Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized borders. He described our willingness to engage in negotiations and our search for a partner for peace and declared his willingness to talk to any responsible leader in the region any time, anywhere and without preconditions.

Before I conclude, I would like to reiterate my Government's urgent concern regarding the situation along Israel's northern border. Since the Council last convened, cross-border violations by the Hizbullah have continued without respite. There has been no movement from the Governments that supports Hizbullah — Lebanon, Syria and Iran — to heed the call of the Secretary-General and the international community or to prevent attacks across the Blue Line. Two days ago, five people were wounded in the village of Ghajar during a heavy missile and mortar bombardment from Lebanon. Among the wounded were three children and an infant. Yesterday, Hizbullah fired mortar shells, anti-tank missiles and rockets at civilian and military targets in northern Israel in one of the heaviest bombardments since Israel withdrew. Since Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon in May 2000, in full compliance with resolution 425 (1978), the widespread attacks in the Mount Dov region near Mount Hermon and close to Moshav Avivim have been carried out live on Lebanese television. Seven Israeli soldiers have been wounded. In addition, this afternoon the Secretary General of Hizbullah, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, pledged that attacks against Israeli targets would continue.

These illegal and unprovoked cross-border attacks constitute an urgent threat to regional peace and security and are being carried out by terrorists intent on escalating the Palestinian conflict into a broader regional confrontation. Let it be clear to everyone that the cause of the instability along the northern border is the acts of aggression by Hizbullah, with state support, and that Israeli is doing its utmost, while reserving its rights to respond, to prevent Hizbullah's attempts to broaden the confrontation from succeeding. Despite calls from across the international community, nothing has so far deterred Hizbullah from its course. As the Secretary-General declared in his recent statement before the Council,

> "The Government of Lebanon will be aware that it is responsible for any hostile actions taken from its territory". (*S/PV.4506, Resumption 2, p. 6*)

I appeal to the members of the Council to act immediately to compel the responsible Governments to end their support for Hizbullah and to prevent the widening of the current conflict in the Middle East.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Norway remains deeply alarmed at the present situation in the Middle East. Norway remains convinced that only the resumption of a political process can bring an end to the occupation and bring a lasting solution and peace to Israelis and

Palestinians. The Security Council has indicated the way forward through its recent resolutions, as well as in resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Israel must immediately stop its military actions against Palestinian towns and villages and withdraw its forces. Similarly, President Arafat must once again, in Arabic, renounce suicide bombings.

The international community, and indeed this Council, must stand united in their demand that these Security Council resolutions be implemented. Norway gives its full support to the recent United States initiative and the mission of Secretary Powell.

President Arafat's ability to function as the leader of the Palestinian Authority must be restored immediately. There will be no way out of the present dire situation unless this occurs.

Norway is extremely concerned with the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian area. Norway, in its capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of International Assistance to Palestinians and on behalf of the international donor community, sent a letter yesterday to Prime Minister Sharon expressing deep concern about the latest developments and the humanitarian situation in the region. Norway urged Israel to ensure the safety of civilians and allow medical personnel immediate, safe and unhindered access to the sick and wounded in accordance with universally accepted norms of international humanitarian law; to lift the curfew within Palestinian cities and permit the entry of food and medical supplies; to avoid damage to civilian infrastructure and facilitate repairs to water and electrical systems; and to ensure that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the donor community have immediate, safe and unhindered access to and movement within the West Bank and Gaza.

Norway is also deeply concerned with the developments in the border areas between Lebanon, Syria and Israel. The present escalation in that area has the potential to threaten regional peace and security. The latest incursions into Israel must stop. Norway urges all parties concerned to show restraint and to de-escalate the situation immediately.

Mr. Cunningham (United States): Much has happened since we met in this Chamber last Thursday. Last Thursday, President Bush spoke from the Rose Garden to the parties in the Middle East conflict and he dispatched Secretary Powell to the region to work towards the implementation of Security Council resolution 1402 (2002). I spoke with the Secretary before his departure last night, briefed him on our informal discussions of yesterday and conveyed the Council's support for his mission.

The Council has now adopted three constructive and comprehensive resolutions and has said what needs to be said in a clear, unified voice. Resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) form a roadmap and a goal. They are the basis for the Secretary's mission and the efforts of the "quartet", which is due to meet in Madrid on 10 April.

In the region itself, Special Envoy General Zinni met with Chairman Arafat last Friday and with Prime Minister Sharon today. Echoing the Security Council's recent calls, General Zinni focused on the need for an immediate ceasefire, Israeli withdrawal and agreement from the Palestinian Authority on implementation of the Tenet work plan.

Now is the time for leadership on the ground and in the region. We do not need any more resolutions. We need full implementation of the existing ones. Although neither side has demonstrated compliance with resolution 1402 (2002), a high-level diplomatic effort is now under way. President Bush has called for Israeli withdrawal without delay. He spoke directly with Prime Minister Sharon on 6 April to deliver this message. Today, he repeated, once again, that he meant what he said.

He has also called on the Palestinian Authority and leaders in the region to do everything in their power to stop terrorist activities and to stop inciting violence by glorifying terror in State-owned media or by telling suicide bombers that they are martyrs. In the absence of a clear condemnation of terrorism by Arab leaders, Palestinian suicide bombers in Gaza and the West Bank will be convinced that they have a green light to destroy any hope of a return to a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. All who care about the Palestinian people must join in acting against groups like Hizbullah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which oppose a peace process and seek the destruction of Israel.

I must again call the Council's attention to the dangerous situation along the Blue Line. A thorough discussion of non-compliance with United Nations

resolutions would necessarily demand a focus on Hizbullah and its backers. Hizbullah actions can only be understood as a deliberate effort to escalate the situation and widen the conflict just as Secretary of State Powell arrives in the region to promote implementation of resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). Daily Hizbullah-initiated attacks are in breach of resolution 1391 (2002) and risk provoking dangerous escalation. Hizbullah's 4 April assault on United Nations peacekeepers also shows their contempt for United Nations institutions, Security Council decisions and Lebanon's own obligations under resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978).

Finally, in the current, extremely dangerous situation, we call on all sides, especially Lebanese and Syrian leaders who have influence over Hizbullah's actions, to exercise maximum restraint and work to prevent a serious escalation that could destabilize the region.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): I wish to associate my delegation fully with the statement to be made later in the debate by the Permanent Representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

My authorities are deeply disturbed at the failure to implement resolution 1402 (2002) and resolution 1403 (2002). They are especially disturbed at Israel's failure to withdraw its troops from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah, in defiance of its obligations under Security Council resolutions.

When resolution 1403 (2002) demanded the implementation of resolution 1402 (2002) without delay, the Council did not mean that it should be implemented when Israel declared that its current military operations had ended. It meant that there should be no delay in Israel's turning its tanks around and in withdrawing the troops from the A areas. The demand of the Council, therefore, was not for withdrawal when circumstances permitted, or on any incremental basis. It meant Israeli withdrawal now — now meaning 4 April. Instead, and on the contrary, the Israeli authorities have extended their military operations in Palestinian cities.

By Israel's own count, the current operation has now resulted in more than 200 deaths among Palestinians. Of course, many of these were innocent civilians. There have also been very grave violations of international humanitarian law accompanying Israeli military actions. This is utterly unacceptable.

We have not been told how many of those killed had been engaged in the planning and execution of suicide bombings, who, according to Israel, are the targets of its current military campaign. One thing, however, is certain. The current operation, instead, may well have created many more militants, and will have recruited many more young people for extreme political movements. The task of the Palestinian Authority in exercising control and combating terrorism in the A areas has been made still more difficult through the destruction of still more of its infrastructure. The Israeli actions are, by any standards, in conflict with the vision set out by the Council in resolution 1397 (2002), in the declaration of the Beirut Summit, by President Bush, by the European Union and by many others.

My delegation has said many times in this Chamber that Israel is entitled to take measures to defend itself against the terrorists who engage in suicide bombings. In doing so, however, it is not entitled to violate international humanitarian law. It is also not entitled to suppress the economic and social life of an entire population. It is not entitled to restrict the movement of humanitarian aid or to put people's lives at risk through preventing the movement of ambulances. Recklessly endangering the lives of civilians is criminal and counter-productive.

Irrespective of the outcome of the current Israeli military campaign, the essential problem remains that the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people have been frustrated for far too long. We have said many times in this Chamber that the interests of Israeli security are not served by holding the entire Palestinian people in a state of subjection. They are best served by engaging in a meaningful political process leading to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

Resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), of course, make demands on both sides. Ireland also calls on the Palestinian Authority, for its part, to respond positively and fully to the call for a ceasefire.

My authorities greatly welcome the impending mission of Secretary of State Powell to the region, and we hope that his efforts, together with those of the "quartet" and others, will achieve a ceasefire and a return to negotiations towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. These efforts, if they are to succeed, must address concerns on all sides. The

mediators must also bear in mind that the Palestinian people have the same right as the Israeli people to live in peace and in dignity. They have the same right as the Israeli people to choose their leaders. Treating them with the necessary respect and dignity also means treating their chosen leaders with respect, dignity and impartiality. Equally, Israel has an absolute right to the necessary security assurances.

My authorities also are seriously concerned at the increase in tension along the Blue Line, and at the violations of it that have taken place. I would recall that the Security Council has endorsed the work of the United Nations in establishing the Blue Line, and has also endorsed the Secretary-General's conclusion that Israel has withdrawn its forces from Lebanon in accordance with resolution 425 (1978). This resolution, as well as resolution 1310 (2000), and all other Security Council resolutions, must be respected in all its parts. The unacceptable attack that took place on unarmed United Nations military observers last Thursday and the attacks that led to the injury of several Israeli soldiers and civilians are to be condemned unreservedly.

Making a desert, whether militarily, politically or economically, and calling it peace is hardly wise policy. This is something that should be especially pondered by Israel. Both sides know what must be done for the sake of their peoples. Let this be done without any further delay.

Mr. Aguilar Zínser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council has reiterated the urgent need for the implementation of resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002) by adopting resolution 1403 (2002). The Security Council has called upon the parties to move immediately to a ceasefire and for Israeli troops to withdraw from Palestinian cities. The Security Council has met twice with the Permanent Representative of Israel and twice with the Permanent Observer of Palestine, and repeated its call for a ceasefire. On many occasions, in its resolutions and presidential statements, the Council has expressed support for the negotiation efforts of the "quartet". Nevertheless, the situation in the Middle East continues to deteriorate and to be the cause of increasing concern.

In view of this, Mexico expresses its intense concern at the fact that the confrontations in their current form will have very serious consequences for the future. The events of today will serve as a justifications brandished by future terrorists in order to perpetuate violence between Israelis and Palestinians and to persist in the spiral of hatred. Peace and security are truly threatened. That is the perception of all the Members of the United Nations and of world public opinion. It is also what is expressed through the growing number of mass demonstrations in the streets. The United Nations and the Security Council are compelled to heed the legitimate concern of world public opinion, to seek ways of making international law prevail and to bring about compliance with the demand for an immediate ceasefire and the initiation of peace negotiations.

The continuation of the disproportionate use of force; the siege on the civilian population in the Palestinian territories and refugee camps; the use of weapons of great destructive power in densely populated areas; the obstruction of humanitarian and medical assistance; and Israel's siege of the Palestinian Authority: these are all flagrant violations of international humanitarian law. Nothing, no cause or reason, can justify such actions under international law.

This defiance of the appeals of the international community leads Mexico to appeal once again to Israel to put an end to its military operations in the Palestinian territories. We stress that the excessive use of force and the violations of international humanitarian law are unacceptable. Israel will not be able to find the security it seeks, it will not be able to prevent further acts of terrorism against its people and it will not be able to live in peace with its neighbours — all of which are its legitimate rights — if it turns its back on the international community, ignores the Council's resolutions and flagrantly violates international humanitarian law.

The Security Council must be firm in demanding compliance with its resolutions in this connection. In this respect, the United Nations Charter is clear in establishing measures for implementing Council decisions, as well as the measures necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security wherever it is threatened or breached. The Council must not lose sight of its mandate and its powers.

Mexico reiterates once again that it shares the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side, in peace and security. However, it is true that this goal can be achieved only if both sides relinquish aggression and reprisals.

Mexico notes with concern that Palestinian suicide bombing attacks in Israel have now been joined by Hizbullah attacks from southern Lebanon in violation of the Blue Line. These actions threaten to further worsen the situation and spread the conflict through the region, drawing in other areas and other actors.

The Palestinian Authority continues to defy the international community and to fail its people. That is why President Arafat must declare his unequivocal rejection of suicide attacks, including the suicide attacks that have cost dozens of innocent civilian lives in Israel. He must call on Palestinian organizations such as Hamas and others, and their leaders to put an end to these acts. He must address Palestinian citizens and Arab public opinion, declaring that terrorism is absolutely contrary to the interests and the cause of the Palestinian people.

Mexico endorses the Council's call in resolutions 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002) for the parties to cease all acts of violence, including terrorism, provocation, incitement and destruction. The international community has turned to the United Nations, as the highest legal, political and moral authority, to resolve a conflict that is jeopardizing international security. The Council has already demanded that the parties put an end to the violence. In view of the mistrust between the two parties, the Council must explore action and effective support mechanisms for those who seek peace in the Middle East, so that its clear demands may be met.

In that respect, Mexico firmly supports the activities of the "quartet" and Secretary of State Colin Powell to take constructive steps towards a just and lasting peace in the Middle Peace. We have said that the clearer the mediators' position, the more effective their actions on the conflict will be.

The mediation efforts must be supported by concrete measures from the Council. In that regard, Mexico agrees with the Secretary-General that it is imperative to start thinking about the terms of reference for active participation by a third party that will help bring about the conditions for peace. A mechanism must be created to observe and monitor compliance with Council resolutions.

Today, it is obvious that Israelis and Palestinians cannot arrive at a solution to the conflict by themselves. Neither of them is moving in the direction of understanding and negotiation. Both are both betting on violence. The international community must recognize this harsh reality. The time has come to explore extraordinary measures that, in keeping with the provisions of the Charter and international law, will put an end to the hostilities.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, my delegation is grateful to you for convening this meeting of the Council at the request of the Arab Group. Four days ago, the Council, following a meeting in which 58 delegations participated, called upon the parties to comply with resolution 1402 (2002) without delay. That resolution, we have said, is the best road-map toward a final political solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict. That solution requires the existence of two States living side by side — the State of Palestine and the State of Israel — within secure, recognized borders. By calling on the parties for an immediate ceasefire, for the withdrawal of Israeli troops and for the cessation of all acts of terrorism and violence, resolution 1402 (2002) creates the conditions for the resumption of negotiations with a view to a final settlement. These negotiations also require the return to calm and tranquillity.

Unfortunately, since our meeting and the urgent appeal made to the States to implement the measures I have just referred to, we must recognize that there has been no visible sign indicating the clear will of the parties to take the royal path towards peace, as outlined by the Council in resolution 1402 (2002). That is why the situation remains extremely disquieting. That is why it is deteriorating daily and why the region seems to be moving inexorably towards what we do not want — an apocalyptic end. People are part of that. The humanitarian crisis is worsening. People are being sacrificed.

Cameroon wishes to restate to the parties that a final solution cannot come from the use of force or terror. The peace which we all desire and to which the people of the region aspire will not be achieved through force. It must be the work of all parties. Cameroon has always said this, and we repeat it today: there will be no peace in the Middle East unless Israelis and Palestinians themselves decide to build that peace, to invent it.

The Council has outlined the path to be followed. It is high time that the parties assume equally their responsibilities by immediately implementing resolution

1402 (2002). That is in their best interests because continuing confrontation, as we have stated, serves no one.

Cameroon places great hope in the outcome of the private meetings that the Council continues to hold with the representatives of Israel and Palestine. Through these meetings, the Council has delineated elements that could bring both sides together to the only acceptable avenue that can serve peace — the implementation of Council resolutions. The implementation of these resolutions alone can help resolve the impasse we find ourselves in today.

We should pay attention to any balanced, constructive proposal in this regard, if its goal is aimed at peace. We expect much from the visit of United States Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region and we expect much from the efforts of the "quartet". We call once again on the parties to cooperate fully and sincerely with these messengers of peace in order to save the lives of innocent civilians and to work steadfastly for the advent of peace in the region.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Over the past few weeks, despite the international community's appeal, military assaults against the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people have continued to intensify. Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) continue unimplemented and ignored. Israel continues to defy the international community and, instead of withdrawing its forces from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah, it has increased and intensified its presence and is setting up its own timetable and conditions for withdrawal. Such defiance constitutes a clear threat to international peace and security. It is appalling and unacceptable, and it should not be tolerated by the Council.

The international community as a whole has denounced Israel's military escalation. The United States National Security Adviser said two days ago that Israel should withdraw and should withdraw now. Any other country that challenged Security Council resolutions in such a manner would have been subjected to all kinds of sanctions. On many occasions the Security Council has insisted on the need for it to be credible, forceful and authoritative enough to ensure the implementation of its resolutions. Israel's non-compliance with Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) is an open challenge to this Council and its credibility. The Security Council needs to take whatever further steps are necessary to ensure the implementation of these resolutions.

The escalation of violence, if not immediately stopped, has the potential of making the wedge existing between Israel and Palestine become so wide that the Council's vision of them living in peace and within secure borders would be severely compromised for a very long time. This Council needs to take immediate, concrete action to stop the ongoing violence and Israeli assaults against the Palestinian people.

The current situation on the ground justifies, more than ever, the deployment of impartial international observers in the region. In our view, such deployment represents the only hope to get out of this impasse, to put an end to the cycle of violence and to consolidate eventually confidence-building measures between the two sides. The non-aligned members of the Security Council have on various occasions over the past 18 months made concrete proposals for the deployment of such an international presence. Had the Security Council positively considered these proposals, the Middle East region would not be in as explosive a situation as it is today.

We support all the efforts that the facilitators, including the "quartet" and the United States envoys, are making to find a solution.

We understand that United States Secretary of State Powell has travelled to the region in an attempt to break the deadlock and to secure an Israeli withdrawal and a ceasefire. He has the full support of our delegation and of the Council, as well as that of the entire international community. But we must also understand that, as the Secretary-General himself has said, Secretary of State Powell has no magic wand. Hence, it is imperative for the Security Council to favourably consider the deployment of international observers before we reach the point of no return.

The humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territories is extremely precarious. The constant violation of international humanitarian law has almost become the norm on the ground. How can we conceive of any country acting so irresponsibly, disregarding all the calls made by the international community for full respect of the basic rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories? Israel claims that its military assaults are aimed at rooting out terrorist networks and at the elements of Hamas and the Hizbullah terrorists who have killed innocent Israeli

citizens. But over the past 18 months of hostilities, more than 400 of the 1,300 Palestinians killed by Israel have been children and women. One wonders, therefore, which side is involved in terror. If this is not terror, it closely resembles terror. We believe that Israel should stop those senseless acts.

The Commission on Human Rights last Friday adopted a resolution calling upon the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Mary Robinson, to undertake a fact-finding mission to the occupied Palestinian territories and to report to the Commission at its current session. We are very pleased that Mrs. Robinson has agreed to lead such a mission as soon as is practicable. We urge Israel to fully cooperate with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and to facilitate such a mission. The international community has the right to be fully informed about the human rights situation in the territories.

Finally, we would like to reiterate what we have said on many occasions in the Council: Chairman Arafat remains the only valid interlocutor that Israel has to make peace with. Any attempt to sideline or marginalize him would not be acceptable.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): As a country associated with the European Union, Bulgaria supports the statement to be made by the Permanent Representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

Bulgaria is deeply concerned about the continuing crisis in the Middle East. We readily associate ourselves with the repeated appeals made in recent days by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, to Israel to withdraw immediately from the occupied territories. At the same time, we believe that it is crucial for President Arafat to call on his people to halt the suicide attacks and to prove that he is in control of his troops by preventing renewed acts of violence.

Bulgaria warmly welcomed the statement made last Thursday by the President of the United States, George W. Bush. We welcome his decision to send Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region, and we unequivocally support, and have high hopes for the efforts of the Special Envoy, General Zinni, on the ground. We appeal to the parties to the conflict to take the steps that he suggested to put an end to this tragic situation. When I describe the situation as tragic, I am thinking primarily of the humanitarian situation. In this regard, I would like to echo the analysis of this serious question made earlier by the representative of Norway, Ambassador Kolby. I have nothing to add to what he said. A humanitarian crisis is looming; the Israeli authorities in particular must take that into account and prevent such a crisis.

Bulgaria does not believe that destroying the very infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority will help to resolve the current problems, particularly the problem of violence. On the contrary, it will exacerbate them, since all moderate forces in the Palestinian camp will be weakened, as will those in the entire Arab world.

We believe that the continued isolation of President Arafat is destabilizing. We call upon Israel to guarantee unlimited access by the international community to President Arafat. In this context, we note with indignation that the Foreign Minister of Spain, Mr. Josep Piqué, and the European Union High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Mr. Javier Solana, have been prevented from meeting with President Arafat.

Another element in the region with which Bulgaria is concerned is the tension along the Blue Line. Hizbullah's violations of the ceasefire and the provisions of resolution 425 (1978) could further destabilize the situation in the region. We protest and condemn any attempt to violate the physical integrity and security of United Nations staff or of Israeli civilians. Clearly, if such tensions continue they could worsen the situation in the occupied territories and delay the withdrawal of Israeli troops from those territories.

Before concluding, I would like to make two important points. The first relates to the need to ensure unlimited access by journalists covering events in the region — that appeal is addressed to the Israeli authorities. Another point of concern to us is the security of sites associated with all of the major religions in the region. Not only are such sites of religious significance for believers throughout the world, but they have cultural and historical importance.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the position of Bulgaria. Bulgaria believes that whatever happens the unity of the Council must be maintained. Resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) can be implemented only if there is unity in the Council. Any future action — and we think that action is not necessary in the next few days — has to be

accompanied by unity of action in the Council over and beyond any nuances and differences in approach that we might have.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I would like to start by thanking you for convening this urgent meeting of the Security Council at the request of the Arab Group.

For the third time in just a few days, we meet to try to confront the attempts by Israel to erode the authority and credibility of this Council.

Members of the Council, with no exception, know that Israel has refused to commit to the provisions of the Council's resolutions. These resolutions clearly call upon Israel to withdraw immediately from Palestinian towns and territories. They also call upon Israel to respect the international humanitarian law, particularly the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

If we take a quick look at the responses provided by the occupying Power, we find an immediate, clear and unequivocal rejection of the Council's resolutions. We find that flimsy pretexts are being advanced. Such pretexts are not acceptable. The Israeli Premier astounded us this morning with yet more expressions of disdain and direct contempt for this Council.

I shall not repeat the statement made by the representative of Palestine a while ago. He explained in detail the distress of the Palestinian people and their suffering.

In the light of the gravity of the situation and of the Palestinian blood being spilled in the streets of the Jenin refugee camp and in the city of Nablus, among others, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in a statement made at the United Nations Second World Assembly on Ageing this morning in Madrid, said:

> "The whole world is demanding that Israel withdraws — I don't think the whole world, including the friends of the Israeli people and Government, can be wrong."

We listened to similar statements by the delegates who took the floor before me. Those who will speak after me will probably also repeat this message. We also listened to the statement by President Bush and to the interview by Dr. Rice, and we listened to the statements made by Secretary of State Powell on the need for an immediate withdrawal.

The Secretary-General went on to say that the situation was extremely dangerous, that large numbers of Palestinian citizens were going for days at a time without medication, food and water, let alone the fact that humanitarian agencies were not allowed to take action or to salvage whatever is left to be saved. As you heard in statements reported in the press and many other statements, Switzerland has lodged a complaint that the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Palestinian Red Crescent were attacked and that ambulances were prevented from moving or transporting the wounded, while those who were wounded were left to die.

The crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories is getting worse by the minute. The occupying Power persists in its crimes of State terror against defenceless and besieged Palestinian civilians. What can be asked of the Palestinian people when they are under siege, being killed and under occupation? I think that what they have had to endure is enough. On television screens we saw the bodies of Palestinian civilians who had been killed and thrown in the streets, which recalls the scenes of the Sabra and Shatila massacre in Beirut, committed at the hands of the current Israeli Prime Minister, Sharon, in 1982.

The crimes follow the same scenario now. Will the Council and the international community allow Sharon and his terrorist army to commit more massacres? Would they be left free to not comply with the Council's resolutions?

With regard to the Blue Line, Lebanon has declared — and I was informed by the Lebanese Mission of the facts — that what is taking place in southern Lebanon is confined to the Shab'a Farms. The Shab'a Farms are Lebanese territories still under Israeli occupation; Lebanon has the right to recover its occupied territories. This was endorsed at all Arab Summit meetings. The Lebanese believe that the incidents reported are the result of continued provocations by the Israelis against the sovereignty of Lebanon.

Suffice it to say that the gross violations of the Lebanese air, maritime and land space are the provocation. There have been more than 1,000 violations of Lebanese air space. Most of those

violations took place at speeds greater than the speed of sound, thereby terrorizing and intimidating Lebanese citizens. As a result, some persons had to be hospitalized due to the ensuing trauma. This afternoon, Israel used 155 millimetre guns to shell the region of Kafr Shuba, in liberated Lebanese territory where Israel is mobilizing its army.

Lebanon confirmed at the highest level that it has no intention whatever of opening up a new front. Questions relating to escalation should be addressed to the Israeli side, which, in the light of its continuous provocations and territorial, naval and aerial violations, is the party responsible for escalation. The Lebanese Government has already ordered its security forces to detain and try some of the elements operating outside the law. As I understand it, the attorney-general and the court of appeals in Lebanon have referred those elements to a military tribunal, where they will be tried and sentenced accordingly.

Addressing this question while discussing the implementation of resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) is an attempt to divert the Council's attention and to sidetrack it. Let us be clear: our voices and our resolutions are in vain while the tragedy of the Palestinian people continues. The Palestinian people beseech the Council to rescue them from a campaign of genocide in which — as the representative of Palestine has already mentioned — planes and all kinds of weaponry are being used in a fashion that surpasses the actions of Nazis.

It is against this backdrop that the Arab Group submitted its request that the Council convene this meeting to take the necessary measures to call upon Israel to respect international humanitarian law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Council should call upon Israel to put an end to its acts of aggression against the Palestinian people and its destruction of Palestinian property, as well as to end its organized terror and its defiance of international legitimacy and the resolutions of the Security Council. Israel must be called upon to withdraw immediately. The Council is called upon to dispatch a United Nations international protection force to protect the Palestinian people, who are being subjected to annihilation and the crime of genocide. Israel must also be called upon to stop its destruction of Christian and Muslim religious sites in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Everyone should be aware of the fact that the ongoing occupation is the main cause of the tragedy unfolding in the region. As we have already pointed out to the Council, this region will never enjoy security unless a just and comprehensive peace is achieved and the root causes of the problem are addressed. This should be done in accordance with the historic initiative of the Arab Summit held in Beirut, which includes provisions for the realization of peace in all its aspects.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): France fully associates itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Ambassador of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

France spoke about the exceptional seriousness of the situation in the Middle East during the two public debates held by the Security Council during the past 10 days. In order to be succinct, I shall not go into detail about the substance of those statements. But they remain entirely current, unfortunately.

The military operations undertaken by the Israeli army against Palestinian towns and villages in the West Bank are continuing and, in fact, have intensified, despite the adoption of Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). As underscored by the Council in the President's statement to the press last night, the military operations have been marked by numerous violations of humanitarian law. Those operations have produced numerous civilian victims and threaten the survival of the Palestinian Authority. This is unacceptable. France appeals to both parties to fully implement resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), now and without further delay. France rejects any sequential or conditional reading of those resolutions. Israel must withdraw now from the Palestinian towns and villages that have been reoccupied. It is also essential that the Palestinian Authority make the necessary gestures to bring about a definitive cessation of terrorist attacks.

I believe that there are three points that deserve to be underscored in the present tragic circumstances. The first pertains to the humanitarian consequences of Israeli military incursions into the West Bank, which are extremely serious. It is unacceptable that medical assistance is not able to reach the injured and the Palestinian population. It is also unacceptable for consuls-general not to have access to their nationals. Israel must immediately take the necessary measures to

come into full compliance with international humanitarian law as defined in the 1949 Geneva Conventions, in particular as regards civilian populations and foreign nationals. The right of consular access to citizens of third States must be guaranteed. Finally, through its highest authorities, France has expressed its distress about the situation around the Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem. All Holy Sites must be fully respected, whether Christian, Jewish or Islamic.

My second point is that the actions of the Security Council must be clearly defined and coordinated with the efforts of the "quartet" in the field.

France appeals to the parties to cooperate fully with all the members of the "quartet", and in particular with the United States Secretary of State, in order to bring about an immediate joint ceasefire and an immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from the reoccupied Palestinian cities. It is essential that the ceasefire be coupled with the resumption without delay of negotiations on a final political settlement of the conflict. The objective of such a settlement is set out in Security Council resolution 1397 (2002): the peaceful coexistence of two independent States, Israel and Palestine, within secure and recognized borders.

Such a ceasefire will not be durable without at least two conditions: that it be accompanied by the resumption of a genuine political process, and that it be guaranteed by the international community's continued engagement with the parties. We cannot leave them to their deadly confrontation. In France's view, the deployment of international observers or monitors charged with helping the parties respect their mutual commitments has long seemed a necessity in the interests of both the Palestinians and the Israelis. That idea seems to be on track today, including on the Israeli side, judging from Ambassador Lancry's statement to the Council this morning. We must work together towards that end.

My third point is that the situation in the Palestinian territories is increasing tension in the entire region, in particular between Lebanon and Israel. France is extremely concerned by the continued exchanges of fire from both sides of the Blue Line. Today the situation is threatening to degenerate. Faced with the risk of escalation, France calls on the parties to demonstrate their sense of responsibility in a concrete way. The parties must refrain from any provocation or disproportionate reaction.

The Security Council, in its resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), has set out the path to be followed. The efforts of all must contribute to the effective implementation of those resolutions without delay. There is no military solution. Peace requires the end of confrontation and the resumption of negotiations.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): On 4 April, the Security Council adopted resolution 1403 (2002), demanding the implementation of resolution 1402 (2002) without delay. However, for three days, Israel has ignored the demands of the Council and the international community. Instead of withdrawing from the Palestinian territories, it has stepped up its military actions. That has led to a deepening of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. We are deeply concerned, and we express our regret over the situation.

The Israeli authorities have carried out military attacks against Palestinian cities and have conducted searches in a barbaric manner, in violation of relevant Security Council resolutions, including those relating to the protection of civilians in armed conflict. Such acts have also seriously violated the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people and have led to a grave humanitarian situation.

The wilful acts of the Israeli authorities are an obstacle to all the efforts of the international community, including the United Nations, to stop the escalation of violence between Israel and Palestine and to promote peace in the Middle East. Such acts have also made it more difficult to realize the hope for the peaceful coexistence of Israel and Palestine. The military attacks of the Israeli authorities against the Palestinians, carried out in the name of anti-terrorism, have led to serious losses of Palestinian lives and property. Such military attacks also interfere with and undermine the international community's effort to combat terrorism.

In order to put an end to the violent conflict between Israel and Palestine and to promote the Middle East peace process, the most urgent task today is to urge Israel to implement Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), to withdraw its troops immediately and unconditionally from all Palestinian

cities, and to guarantee the safety and freedom of Chairman Arafat.

Our condemnation of Israel's military attacks and our explicit demand that Israel withdraw its troops do not mean that we accept suicide bombings. The killing of innocent civilians in Israel can only add to fuel to the fire. It cannot help the just cause of the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

The international community must take concerted action to prevent the situation in the Middle East from continuing to deteriorate. We support all international efforts aimed at easing the crisis. The leadership and the Government of China have been working hard to ease the conflict between Israel and Palestine. We will continue to conduct consultations in cooperation with all parties concerned.

Sir. Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): The position of the European Union (EU) will be fully set out by the Spanish presidency later in this debate, and the United Kingdom strongly supports the statement that will be made.

First, we are very disturbed by reports from southern Lebanon and the Blue Line. The rise in tension there has to be reversed. We strongly endorse the European Union's condemnation of the recent attacks from Lebanese territory, and the United Kingdom shares the positions of our French and Irish partners on that issue.

Secondly, on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I have to add to the EU's statement that the United Kingdom finds the continuing — indeed, escalating — Israeli military action following the adoption of resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) intolerable. It amounts to a defiance of the Security Council, and we condemn it. We demand the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from areas that are the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority. In addition, we expect Israel rigorously to respect humanitarian norms and to prevent human rights abuses. Their carelessness as regards the effects of the fighting on civilians is, prima facie, a breach of Security Council resolutions on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

On the Palestinian side, whatever the motivation, there has been an equivocation about resorting to violence and about the scope allowed for the committing of acts of terrorism. The Palestinian leadership must be unequivocal in opposing suicide bombing and then in taking action to see that these instructions are respected. Israel must, of course, allow President Arafat to do his job in this, as in other respects.

There has begun to be talk of a further draft resolution. I would advise the Council against any debasing of the currency of its resolutions. Israel's actions, while they continue, are amounting to self-condemnation. We hope they stop now, but if they do not, the effect of that disastrously counterproductive approach will be far more compelling than another version of resolutions 1397 (2002) or 1402 (2002). Let those resolutions speak for themselves and let the activity in the region of Secretary Powell and other senior representatives of the "quartet" take the operational lead in bringing this horrific episode to a close. Third-party involvement has now become absolutely essential and this could extend — as the Ambassador of France has said — to monitoring.

When the Security Council next puts effort into a new draft resolution, it should be to spell out, with clarity and unanimity, the political route out of this quagmire, without which no progress away from violence is going to be a realistic prospect.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since 12 March, the Council has adopted three resolutions. The latest, resolution 1403 (2002), was adopted unanimously. That makes three resolutions in three weeks, in contrast to the earlier period, when 18 months elapsed with no convergence on how to register a conclusion reflecting the deterioration of a situation that has led to the deep political and humanitarian crisis we now face.

For the Council, the topic on today's agenda is as old as the United Nations itself. We have become accustomed to quoting and requoting the best-known resolutions and, unfortunately, every time we do so it is because they have not been complied with. The Council must insist yet again, however, if it is to fulfil its obligations with respect to international peace and security. It must do so at a particularly sensitive moment, when several factors have to come together if we are to work coherently to address the widespread violence, its serious impact on the civilian population, the dire need for access to humanitarian assistance, the resumption of open conflict in northern Israel across the Blue Line and the growing risk of destabilization throughout the region.

The focus of our discussion today is immediate and unconditional compliance with the resolutions of the Security Council. Colombia cannot accept or conceive of any argument in support of non-compliance with the resolutions of this organ. The basis for our statements is the clearly defined political vision in resolution 1397 (2002) and the demands in resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) for the restoration of conditions of security. Both sides have obligations to discharge without delay. The Council must do its utmost to ensure that final outcome. Thus, Israel must immediately withdraw its armed forces from the occupied cities, including Ramallah. Equally and as a consequence of the foregoing, Palestine must do everything in its power to implement a ceasefire. These are the sine qua non conditions for the restoration of security and of the viability of a political process that can be supported by the parties and the international community as a whole.

In this context, we must consider the desirability of formally establishing some type of international presence that will help the parties to maintain the validity of these resolutions. This may contribute in turn to the parallel restoration of a sufficient level of trust between the parties, which could promote political convergence.

The work of the Security Council must be part of a concerted international effort to support the efforts of other relevant actors. After many attempts, we have now achieved consensus in the adoption of our recent resolution. This unity will be meaningful, however, only if it is articulated in coordination with the activities of the other relevant international actors, the "quartet" in particular. That mechanism must therefore be allowed to operate without limitation in the field. That, of course, is and has been the wish of all of us here.

We conclude by referring to the humanitarian situation, a matter that cannot be ignored or subject to negotiation or exceptions. Regardless of the conditions prevailing in the conflict, the parties are obligated to do everything in their power to respect the physical and moral integrity of civilians affected by those conditions. In this respect, just as we unreservedly condemn attacks on the civilian population by suicidal extremists, we also demand of the Government of Israel that it adhere strictly to the standards of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention in dealing with defenceless minors, journalists, humanitarian personnel — including that of the International Committee of the Red Cross — and United Nations personnel.

Ultimately, we all understand that Israel's armed forces are seeking to protect Israeli civilians, but we must ask ourselves: Who is protecting Palestinian civilians living in the occupied territories, particularly now that the Palestinian Authority has been reduced to its smallest common denominator?

Mr. Fall (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is very pleased to participate in this open meeting of the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

The situation that is evolving in the field, regrettably, compels the Council to remain focused on that worrisome development. Despite the adoption in close succession of three resolutions calling on the parties to renounce violence, the situation has continued to deteriorate. Israel has pursued its policy of re-occupying self-governing Palestinian zones, in contempt of the relevant provisions of those resolutions.

My delegation deplores the growing number of victims among the civilian populations. In its efforts to lead both parties to renounce violence and occupation, the Council has worked strenuously to ensure the effective implementation of resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), in particular the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities. It is, however, in the interests of all the parties that these recent resolutions of the Council be fully implemented.

Israel must abandon the intensification of its military campaign against Palestinian towns and the Palestinian Authority and stop defying the international community in general and the Security Council in particular. The isolation of Chairman Arafat and the ongoing siege of the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority must come to an end.

My delegation notes that, following several attempts to negotiate, several mediators have been unable to obtain an effective ceasefire or the withdrawal of Israeli troops. It would appear that the initiatives of the "quartet" must now be harmonized to arrive at a common strategy for action that can achieve a settlement to the crisis.

In that regard, my delegation welcomes next Wednesday's meeting in Madrid of the "quartet", in which Secretary-General Kofi Annan will participate.

The world today places great hope in the trip to the subregion that the United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has just begun. Given the seriousness of the situation and the urgency of taking measures to put an end to the escalation of violence, my delegation would have wished that this visit had begun with the parties involved. We nonetheless expect much from this high-level United States initiative.

The private meetings held on 2 April and today have revealed a difference of opinion between the parties over the meaning of the three resolutions adopted recently. This reflects the realities on the ground. My delegation encourages the Council to institutionalize this practice of private meetings with the two representatives in order to continue examining the evolution of the positions of the parties and their compliance with their commitments.

Furthermore, we believe that the situation along the Blue Line is also a source of great concern. All parties must commit themselves to respecting the Blue Line and agreed provisions. No action can justify another. There can be no doubt that the risk of escalation along the Line is real.

My delegation notes with concern that if the initiatives under way do not bring about an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli troops, the humanitarian situation, which is already a cause of concern, could worsen inexorably, ultimately with even more civilian victims.

We must recognize that this situation could also bring about the full dismantling of the Palestinian Authority, and even its pure and simple destruction. For our part, we are convinced that this policy runs counter to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and international law. It deserves to be vigorously condemned, because its natural consequence is an increase in terrorism and the emergence of uncontrolled armed groups whose activities will be even more damaging to international security.

It is therefore imperative that every measure be taken for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions so that the possibility remains open of a final settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict.

In that connection, and in light of the statements that the Israeli and Palestinian representative made this morning during our private meetings, we feel that it is useful to suggest to the Council as well as to the co-sponsors of the peace process that they do everything they can to convince the two parties to make parallel statements in which they clearly recognize the need to implement without delay the relevant resolutions of the Council, in particular 1402 (2002).

Ms. Lee (Singapore): The Security Council is meeting once again, for the third time in just over a week, to consider the dangerous situation in the Middle East, especially in the occupied territories. We will not repeat the points made in recent debates. However, it bears reiterating that the Security Council is determined to see the full and immediate implementation of its resolutions, in particular resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). Resolution 1403 (2002) was the first resolution on the Middle East in a long time which was submitted as a presidential text and adopted unanimously by the Security Council. This clear message from a united Council must be heeded.

Many significant diplomatic initiatives have been undertaken to help implement these resolutions, including the decision by United States President George Bush to dispatch Secretary of State Powell to the region, and the momentous decision taken by the Arab leaders at the Beirut Summit. However, no amount of diplomatic initiatives, including the current debate of the Security Council, can substitute for real action on the ground, not least by the parties involved.

Yet despite the clear demands of the Security Council, we find developments moving in exactly the opposite direction. Not only have Israeli troops not been withdrawn from Palestinian cities, including Ramallah; there has, in fact, been an acceleration of military incursions into occupied territories, resulting in the loss of too many civilian lives.

We heard earlier today of the alarming humanitarian situation in the occupied territories. Whilst Israel has every right to exercise self-defence, its obligations under international law are also clear. It must allow immediate medical access to the occupied areas by international humanitarian agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Both parties have found it impossible to move towards any meaningful ceasefire, and implementation of the Tenet security work plan or of the Mitchell Committee recommendations looks further away than ever. Violence, including acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, have continued unabated.

Before the adoption of resolution 1403 (2002) last week, the Secretary-General pointed out that all parties risked making serious miscalculations about the effects that their actions are going to have on each other. This includes the disquieting developments along the Blue Line. Such miscalculations would draw the region into greater and greater danger.

We stand ready to take any further action, in a united fashion, which could help facilitate the work of international mediators on the ground to halt the violence, bring an end to the suicide bombings and secure the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities. It is now time for the parties to listen to the voice of reason and to act in accordance with the collective will of the international community, expressed through resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002).

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

Russia is profoundly concerned at what is happening. The information provided by Under-Secretary-General Kieran Prendergast at today's briefing during Council consultations pointed to gross violations of the norms of international law in the occupied Palestinian territories, a large number of casualties among the civilian population and impediments caused by Israel to the activities of international humanitarian organizations. We have no grounds not to believe the information provided by Mr. Prendergast.

Holy sites in Palestinian territories are under threat, including the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, which for many days now has been blockaded by Israeli forces. According to information that reaches us, shooting is taking place around the church and a fire has started in neighbouring buildings.

A comprehensive settlement in the region can be achieved only through political dialogue. There can be no military solution. We strongly call upon the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to immediately implement all of the provisions of resolutions 1397 (2002) and, particularly, 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), to urgently declare a ceasefire, to immediately stop the incursion by Israeli forces into Palestinian towns and to begin the withdrawal of those forces.

It is essential to stop the destruction of the structures of the Palestinian Authority and the isolation of Chairman Arafat, who is the leader of the Palestinian people. It is precisely he who should lead Palestinian efforts to normalize the situation.

More and more, members of the international community — and we were convinced about this at today's briefing — are concluding that unless there is an international presence in the occupied territories, it will be impossible to reverse the current course of events along military lines. We think that the Security Council should be ready in the most serious manner possible urgently to consider this question. The further uncontrolled course of events would be extremely dangerous and could lead to long-term undermining of Palestinian-Israeli and Arab-Israeli relations.

A new pocket of tension is already growing around the Blue Line. Therefore, at this stage, I stress once again that it is essential to ensure the implementation of resolution 1402 (2002). The Security Council is united in this. It has called upon the parties to fully cooperate to that end with the "quartet". It will persist in seeking implementation of its decisions.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I should like to inform Council members that I have received letters from the representatives of Lebanon, Mauritania, the Republic of Korea and the United Arab Emirates in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda.

In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Diab (Lebanon), Mr. Ould Deddach (Mauritania), Mr. Sun Joun-yung (the Republic of Korea), and Mr. Al-Shamsi (the United Arab Emirates) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

Moreover, I wish to inform Council members that the Arab Group, in particular the delegation of Syria, has asked to hold consultations today to introduce the draft resolution. Since, in any case, we will have to conclude our work by 7 p.m., we will conclude this official part of the meeting at 6.30 p.m. and move to the consultations room, so that the Syrian delegation can then introduce the draft resolution. The continuation of today's discussion will be resumed tomorrow at 10.30 a.m.

We will now continue with our meeting. The next speaker on my list is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to express to you on behalf of the Arab Group, whose chairmanship we hold for this month, our thanks and appreciation for your prompt response in convening this emergency meeting. It is being held in tragic circumstances that cause sentiments of sorrow, bewilderment and condemnation, due to the continued deterioration of the situation in the Palestinian territories and the Israeli Government's insistence on betting on the logic of war and weaponry rather than drawing on the logic of peace and dialogue on the basis of the United Nations resolutions, which are the foundation of the peace process.

We are dismayed by the total disregard of Sharon's Government for the relevant United Nations resolutions, especially those recently adopted by the Security Council. We are dismayed by the Israeli military machine's persistent use of brutal force in the occupied Palestinian territories, with open recklessness and disregard for the will of the international community and an open contempt for the series of appeals made by the peace-loving parties.

We have expressed our great appreciation for the international community's progress in addressing the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. That progress came in the form of the Council's adoption of resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), which call for the establishment of a Palestinian State within secure and internationally recognized borders and for the immediate Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories. We also welcomed the call made by the President of the United States, Mr. George Bush, for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Palestinian cities that had been reoccupied, for a freeze on all settlement activities and for the withdrawal from the Palestinian territories, in conformity with resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We also welcomed with high expectations the news of the peaceful mission to the region of the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Colin Powell, for which we have high hopes.

However, the Israeli occupying Power, in flagrant defiance of all the aforementioned resolutions, has refused and persisted with adamant stubbornness in its all-out, ferocious war in the Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps, allowing itself to kill countless numbers of unarmed Palestinian civilians in flagrant violation of the norms of international law and international humanitarian law, in an unmistakable attempt to present the international community with a fait accompli, so that Israel could later disavow its obligations under the relevant United Nations resolutions. The Ambassador of the United Kingdom, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, said that what Israel is doing constitutes self-condemnation and that the Council must therefore underline and officially affirm this condemnation in its resolutions.

What is at stake today is the credibility of the Council, which is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security. In these extremely tragic circumstances, we cannot stand idly by in the face of the appalling Israeli conduct, as if we were declaring the international community unable to force Israel to comply with the Security Council's resolutions and to put an end to the dangerous spiral of its practices, which constitute a clear threat to international peace and security.

Tunisia reaffirms its full solidarity with the fraternal Palestinian people and its legitimate leadership headed by President Arafat, in order to restore all the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which is the establishment of an independent State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital.

While we demand immediate implementation of Council resolutions, especially the most recent one, resolution 1403 (2002), and the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Palestinian territories, we underscore the need for mustering all efforts of the international community, especially the

major international players, such as the "quartet", in order to ensure urgent international protection for the Palestinian people and to prevent any further deterioration of the situation.

We must also stress the need for immediate and effective action to end the siege imposed on the great national fighter and leader of the Palestinian people's national march, President Arafat. All obstacles placed on the Palestinian Authority's infrastructure must be removed immediately with a view to laying the groundwork for the resumption of the peace process and the revival of the inescapable and indispensable Israeli-Palestinian negotiating track, especially in the aftermath of the Beirut Arab Summit, which made it abundantly clear that peace is the strategic option chosen by all Arab States.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): By sheer coincidence, yesterday I was watching a documentary on the resistance to occupation in European cities during the Second World War. I saw members of the resistance, who Israel today dares to call terrorists. I saw the popular armed resistance against the occupation of the cities of Warsaw, and Arnhem, in the Netherlands, and other cities and villages in Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Norway, France and elsewhere. I was indeed profoundly saddened to see this attempt to reverse the truth, falsify criteria, blatant lies and other actions that attempt to circumvent international law and marginalize the role of international will embodied in Security Council resolutions.

We all watch on television the continuing savage onslaught against Palestinian civilians, cities and towns. We all see the Palestinian people attempting to resist the occupation forces. We are confident that the outcome will be what we have witnessed throughout the course of human history: the defeat of occupation forces and the victory of the right to self-determination. However, the question that remains is, how long the world will permit victims to fall and cities and towns to be destroyed and their inhabitants to be attacked.

Israel continues its aggressive military operations against the Palestinian people, their infrastructure, churches, mosques, homes, schools and hospitals. Israel continues to refuse to implement the resolutions of this Council, 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). The Israeli Government continues to claim that it is extending its hand towards peace. However, it is actually using it hands to kill civilians. It attempts to impose hegemony and is using blind armed force, leaving the injured and the dead in the streets, preventing any assistance from reaching them and preventing their burial. In so doing, it is deepening hatred and is inciting extremism. Israel is attempting to delude the world, claiming that it raises the banner of democracy and the culture of peace. In fact, it practises an illegal policy of inhuman aggression.

Yesterday the Council issued a statement to the press, declaring its deep concern at Israel's failure to implement its resolutions. It pointed out that the continuing violence by the Power controlling events on the ground is unacceptable. We were deeply shocked once again at the Council's failure to stand firmly and resolutely against this Israeli violation of Council resolutions; this is a situation that has reached the point at which the Council is incapable of calling the occupying State, Israel, by name and refers to it in all its previous resolutions as the occupation State. Today we see the Council timidly referring in whispers to the violence of the controlling Power. The Council today is called upon to be resolute, to assume its responsibilities in accordance with the Charter of this Organization and not to allow the law of the jungle to overcome international law.

Despite the bilateral efforts by several parties of the international community and the forces that influence the international scene, the Security Council is called upon to stop the aggression, using the mechanisms available to it. It is called upon to order the immediate withdrawal from the Palestinian territories and to dispatch an international observer force to guarantee protection of the Palestinian people and to ensure that Israel will never again carry out aggression against the Palestinian territories.

Until now Israel has rejected the proposal to send an international observer force to the Palestinian territories. On our side, we fully realize the reasons behind this intransigent attitude. Israel feels that the arrival of such a force refers to textual commitments in the Tenet plan and Mitchell recommendations, which contradict its expansionist policies and its policy of glorifying occupation and maintaining the land for the

settlers at the expense of the future of the Palestinians and of international law.

The Israeli Government's practices are deepening the conflict and the hatred. They threaten the future of coexistence and cooperation in that region. My country is at the very heart of that region, and thus we hope that the Security Council will understand the role it is called on to play and that it will carry out that role with the effectiveness expected of it. Therefore, we hope that the Council will call for immediate Israeli withdrawal so that the situation can be brought under control and so there can be an end to all acts of confrontation, allowing the opportunity for calm and for the entry of international observers in an appropriate and requisite number so that the situation may be stabilized, thus allowing implementation of the understandings and recommendations that we have already mentioned. This must be followed by the return to negotiations in order to achieve settlement on the basis of international law and the resolutions, agreements and understandings of which we are all aware.

I wish to make a final comment. We emphasize this and call on the Council members to understand it, confident that they will agree with us on these particular points. We mean the following.

First, all attempts to jeopardize the personal safety of President Arafat in his capacity as the legitimate President of the Palestinian people will be broken on the solid rock of Palestinian determination to maintain its national leadership and the entire world's support of that leadership. Secondly, the acts of the Israeli Government will, unfortunately, lead to further innocent victims on both the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

We hope that the Council will succeed in fulfilling its responsibilities in facing the defiance and aggression of Israel.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Ndhlovu (South Africa): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this emergency meeting of the Security Council, which has been called in response to Israel's ongoing refusal to implement Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). We note with great concern that the Israeli Government is using the time period between the adoption of resolution 1403 (2002) and Secretary of State Powell's visit to the region to intensify its military operations against the Palestinian Authority and the people in the occupied territory, including Jerusalem.

The Non-Aligned Movement firmly believes that Israel's attempt to isolate and humiliate President Arafat is a grave error. Whether Prime Minister Sharon likes it or not, President Arafat was democratically elected by the Palestinian people and remains their leader. Furthermore, as the Secretary-General noted during his statement to the Council on 4 April 2002, the right to self-defence is not a blank cheque.

The unprecedented adoption of three Security Council resolutions in three weeks demonstrates that the international community will not condone the continuation of massive Israeli military aggression against Palestinian towns and cities.

Israel has no jurisdiction over diplomatic representatives, humanitarian workers and journalists, and no right to refuse them access to Palestinian towns and cities. We cannot accept the Israeli Government's dictating to those representatives of the international community accredited to Palestine when they may or may not function. South Africa's Chargé d'affaires in Palestine is among those barred from Ramallah by the Israeli Defence Force, which has declared the city a closed military zone.

Israel's military operations in Palestinian towns and cities have generated a humanitarian and human rights catastrophe throughout the occupied territory, including Jerusalem. According to the Israeli Government's own estimates, hundreds of Palestinian civilians have been killed and many more wounded. We note with deep concern that the Israeli Defence Force continues to deny Red Cross, Red Crescent and other medical and humanitarian workers access to wounded or dead civilians.

We wish to remind the Security Council that three suggested courses of action have been proposed to it by the Non-Aligned Movement, and that it has yet to take them up. The first is that the Council should consider the immediate deployment of a credible, multinational monitoring mechanism or peacekeeping force to ensure that the parties observe a ceasefire and any other agreements that may be reached between them. The

second is that the Council consider sending a mission to Israel and Palestine immediately to obtain a first-hand impression of events on the ground. The third is that the Council consider the suggestion that it meet with Prime Minister Sharon and President Arafat to obtain a first-hand account of the situation on the ground.

The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its demand that Israel immediately implement Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) and respect human rights and international humanitarian law and allow medical and humanitarian workers, journalists and international diplomatic representatives free access to Palestinian towns and cities. We call on Israel to immediately withdraw its forces and to acknowledge that a political, rather than a military, solution needs to be found to the crisis that Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian land has provoked in the Middle East.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Kuwait. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, at the beginning of my statement, to express to you, Mr. President, our thanks for your efforts in addressing the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, which is continuing to deteriorate in a serious manner. This is a result of the Israeli Government's persistence in defying and violating Security Council resolutions and all of the principles of international law. Israel is thus demonstrating a will for war and a thirst for blood. It is under the illusion that brute force is the only means of achieving peace and security for Israel.

Kuwait calls upon the Security Council to take the necessary measures, as is incumbent upon it under the United Nations Charter and international law, to pressure Israel to put an end to genocide and the barbarous massacre of the Palestinian people. Kuwait has paid close attention to the position of the international community since the beginning of this crisis, and we have not heard any valid argument to counter the opinion of the Arab countries regarding the core of the tragic struggle and the crisis we are experiencing or of its cause, which is well known: the continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories. Furthermore, Israel is persisting in activities involving genocide and oppression, as well as failing to implement relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002).

The fact that this meeting is being held is consistent with the role and responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter. We do not agree with those who say that such meetings are not useful. On the contrary, we think this is part and parcel of the Council's mandated responsibility vis-à-vis international peace and security when they are threatened. Media reports indicate that the situation today is extremely grave; they illustrate the determined and wilful killing of defenceless Palestinians and the destruction of their infrastructure.

Kuwait adheres to national and international humanitarian principles. Through a declaration of its Council of Ministers on 7 April, it requested the international community immediately to intervene to stop the genocide being perpetrated by Israeli forces against the Palestinian people. Kuwait has also called for a lifting of the siege of the legitimate leadership of the Palestinians and for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories.

In the statement to the press issued yesterday by its President, the Security Council said that it was disturbed by the policy of the occupying forces to continue to defy Security Council resolutions. Consequently, we call upon the Council to set that position out in a new resolution calling upon Israel to respect the rules of international humanitarian law, proposing the deployment of an international observation force to restore stability to the region, ensuring Israel's implementation of all relevant resolutions and assisting the parties to implement the agreements to which they have subscribed.

Kuwait would like to commend the United States for its initiative to request Israel to withdraw and to cease its military activities in Palestinian territories. It should be pointed out that the United States Government, which is one of the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, should exert pressure on Israel with a view to ensuring that vital United States interests are protected vis-à-vis Arab countries. The United States can play that role because it is also a member of the Security Council, which presupposes greater legal responsibility for the observance of international law. It is because the United States is

aware of the will and resolve of the international community and of the Council that it is in a position to exert pressure against Israel.

Finally, we would like to thank the international "quartet" — the Russian Federation, the European Union, the United States and the United Nations — for its efforts at compelling the Government of Israel to comply with the international community's demands. I would also like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, who took a very bold position in his statement before the Council prior to the adoption of resolution 1403 (2002). Indeed, the Secretary-General has reminded the Government of Israel that self-defence is not a blank cheque for it to spill blood and occupy territory in a manner inconsistent with the principles of international law. We also welcome the statement made by the Secretary-General today.

Kuwait believes that, through its mandate, the Security Council implements the will of the international community. It is for that reason that we call upon the Council to put an end to this crisis as quickly as possible by utilizing the tools and powers it enjoys under the Charter.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Qatar. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like, on behalf of Qatar, Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit, to extend my warmest thanks to you, Mr. President, for the interest you have shown and for responding so quickly to the call to hold this urgent meeting to consider the unprecedented aggression against the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

The Council should have been meeting again to assess what had been accomplished within the framework of the recently adopted resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). But on the contrary, it is meeting today to seek redress in the light of unanimously adopted Security Council resolutions that we want to see Israel respect. It is extremely regrettable that the resolutions of this legitimate body continue to be held hostage. It is inconceivable that the important and decisive resolutions that have been adopted by the Security Council — a body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security — are not being implemented. But that has been the usual outcome when the Council is dealing with the Palestinian question: to date, Israel has continued to defy and flout all resolutions.

The practices of the occupying forces — in particular those in Nablus and Jenin — are the epitome of State terrorism. This barbarity has broken out at a time when we thought that the situation was about to improve. The escalation has continued, and all members of the Council are familiar with the nature of the crimes. I would only mention the deaths, yesterday and today, of about 100 Palestinian martyrs in the refugee camps. Palestinian cities are littered with the wounded and the dead. The occupying forces have not even permitted Red Cross and Red Crescent ambulances to reach victims, which is a grave violation of all norms of international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention.

What is most strange is that some persist in trying to establish a link between the most recent Israeli escalation and what they call "suicide operations". I would ask how valid such a link would be. Since the adoption of the most recent resolution, 1403 (2002), the escalation has been continued by one side, and it is no longer valid to condemn both parties together. The occupying forces, who continue to defy the most recent Security Council resolutions, must be condemned.

On behalf of my country's delegation, I reiterate that the Council is responsible for deterring Israel from its aggression towards the Palestinian people, which has now become unbridled. This is an ethical, moral and legal responsibility, to halt the massacres carried out by the Israeli occupying force against defenceless Palestinian civilians. The Council must undertake strict measures in order to apply its relevant resolutions immediately. In so doing, it would preserve its credibility and fulfil the expectations of the international community with regard to its responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Bahrain, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is very pleased to see your country preside over the Security Council this month, Sir, in particular when a person of your stature, long experience and expertise is presiding. At the same time, we highly

appreciate the work of your predecessor, Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby, the Permanent Representative of Norway, for his efficient conduct of the Council's work last month.

It seems that since the current Israeli Government rose to power, it has carried out a well-considered and specific programme to eliminate the legitimate Palestinian Authority and to occupy the territories under its control, while constantly denying that. However, there is much clear evidence to the contrary: many new settlements have been constructed, requiring the confiscation of new land in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In addition, the head of the Israeli Government announced that Israel needed a million more Jewish immigrants. That million, of course, requires the building of new settlements.

The Palestinian territories have been crowded by Israeli settlements over the terms of successive Israeli Governments, particularly since the current Government introduced its slogan of power and suppression to surpass previous Governments in confiscating Palestinian territories to suppress and humiliate the Palestinian people by erecting roadblocks and cutting off roads, water and electricity. For example, during Ramadan, when Muslims observe their fast, a Palestinian said to a television broadcaster that he leaves for home at 4.30 p.m. but does not arrive there until 10.30 p.m. — five hours after the end of the fasting day — because of roadblocks erected by the Israeli army.

In order for the Israeli Government to begin the implementation of its programme of usurpation and destruction, it had to create a crisis. The head of the Government visited the Al-Aqsa Mosque, setting off protests that started the second intifada with all its destructive consequences. It has escalated to a point unprecedented since the beginning of the Palestinian cause in 1948.

Israel's excessive use of military force, employing a large number of tanks, evokes scenes from both world wars. We saw tanks crush automobiles and prevent ambulances from reaching the injured, transforming Palestine's cities and villages into battlefields. All that is clear evidence of the current Israeli Government's plan, which relies on the achievement of its expansionist policies by force.

We wish to state things as they really are. After 11 September, the Israeli Government deliberately created confusion and misunderstanding with regard to the concept of terrorism. Everyone condemns terrorism and terrorist acts, but everyone also condemns occupation and asks for its end. The Palestinian territories, and part of the Syrian and Lebanese territories, are under occupation. Resistance to the Israeli occupation is internationally recognized as legitimate. No matter how much the Israeli authority tries to confuse the issues and obscure the difference between resistance to occupation and fighting terrorism, it will not succeed. Things are clear, except in the minds of Israeli officials, who are adamant and intransigent.

Resolution 1397 (2002) sets out clearly the idea of two States, Palestinian and Israeli, existing side by side. Before the current Israeli Government's rise to power, the Palestinian State had all the basic qualities of a State, in terms of infrastructure and democratic institutions. Then, suddenly, Israel started destroying that State's infrastructure, besieging its elected President, as if it were saying to the Security Council and the world's leaders that they had the right to think or dream whatever they wanted, but that it would bring about, on the ground, a fait accompli that would benefit not two States, but only one — Israel.

Having unified the capital of Jerusalem by force for its own benefit, Israel wants to unify the entire territory by force for its own benefit as well. It sees no problem in making the Palestinians refugees in their own country, and does not object to their leaving Israel to live in neighbouring Arab countries, as some Israeli extremists are advocating.

There is clear evidence that the world is going in one direction and Israel is going in the opposite one. Where are we in relation to the numerous peaceful initiatives, the last of which was the initiative of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, adopted by all Arab countries? All those initiatives rely on the principle of land for peace. Regrettably, however, Israel pays no attention to that, having said that both the Palestinians and the Arabs want to throw Israel into the sea and therefore do not want to recognize Israel.

The Arabs are now offering a just peace based on the concept of two States, as referred to in resolution 1397 (2002). Nevertheless, Israel — or at least its current Government and its head in particular — has demonstrated no willingness to act accordingly since

the drive for peace began in earnest. Sharon simply seeks both to keep the land and to achieve peace by force.

It has been rare in the history of the Security Council for two resolutions to be adopted on the same issue within such a brief period of time, as was the case with resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). However, we have yet to see Israel implement those resolutions. We consider the Security Council to be the organ best suited to maintaining international peace and security, but when it adopts consecutive resolutions requiring a United Nations member, Israel, to abide by its will, and when that member pays no heed to those resolutions, we believe that it is the Council's duty to enforce the implementation of its resolutions by taking practical measures, as it has done with regard to many hotbeds of tension throughout the world. At the very least, it must dispatch an international observer force to come between the Palestinians and the Israelis, a step similar to those taken by the Council in other conflict areas elsewhere. We believe that the time has come for the Council to take such practical steps to address the situation in the Middle East.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Bahrain for his kind words addressed to me.

I call on the Permanent Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine): A while ago, we listened to the statement made by the Israeli representative, which was indeed an absurd and unfortunate one. The statement basically amounted to an attack on President Yasser Arafat and contained silly, stupid and unsubstantiated allegations that cannot be believed.

Let me make it very clear that the Palestinian people resent and utterly reject those attacks on our President, not only because such an Israeli position reflects the usual arrogance and condescending attitude, and not only because of the fact that the Palestinian leadership is Palestinian business, and not only because of the fact that this is an attack on a democratically elected President of ours and the symbol of the Palestinian national struggle — a man who, indeed, has greatly contributed to the cause of peace and is being attacked by a man who is basically associated with the massacres in Sabra and Shatilah. We do so not because of all these things alone, but also because the reality of the matter is that an attack on President Arafat is in fact an attack on any serious potential for reaching a political settlement. Mr. Sharon wants to get rid of President Arafat precisely because he does not want to reach a political settlement, and not vice versa. Anyone can see that very easily.

We listened to the representative of Israel talk about documents, intelligence, weapons, signatures, salaries and Al-Aqsa — a James Bond story definitely not befitting this Council. Let me just very briefly refer to the fact that, at least from what I saw on television, no rocket-propelled grenades were found; no katyushas were found; and definitely no howitzers were found. This is proof, actually, of Israeli lying all along about Palestinian smuggling of weapons. Palestinian youth in Nablus and in Jenin have only their flesh and the only available weapons are their rifles. That is the only thing we saw on television. By the way, if anyone can buy the idea of a factory for heavy armaments that cost $100,000, frankly, all of us could perhaps become rich somehow in that industry.

Let me come to the important statement by Prime Minister Sharon to which the representative of Israel referred. Let me, if I may, very quickly read out some quotations, as they appear on Reuters:

> "These missions have not yet been completed and the army will continue to operate as fast as possible until the mission is completed, until they dismantle the terrorist infrastructure of Arafat and until they catch the murderers who are holed up in various places, including the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem."

This is the beginning of how positive and how important this additional mad statement is.

> "After the army finishes its mission, it will withdraw on the order of the Government to defined security areas."

"Defined security areas". This is, of course, a new concept that Mr. Sharon is now telling the whole world he will implement. Mr. Sharon went on to say that he had promised Mr. Bush that:

> "We are making every effort to accelerate our military moves and to withdraw our forces from the places where our operations have ended."

"Where our operations have ended". This will create a whole new process of negotiating the withdrawal of the

Israeli forces from the Palestinian cities and towns. The Prime Minister goes on to say:

> "The gangs of murderers have a leader and an aim. The aim is to force us out of here, to throw us out of every place, from the home in Elon Moreh or the supermarket in Jerusalem."

I wonder if there can be more incitement or a more powerful call to hatred than that. Elon Moreh, by the way, is a settlement. Definitely, this gentleman is not a believer in any kind of political settlement, at least not one which would require ending the Israeli occupation and creating a Palestinian State.

Of the Saudi initiative, the Prime Minister says,

> "Despite the extremist demands which were included in the decisions of the Arab Summit in Beirut, I welcome the fact that such an important Arab leader as Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has for the first time recognized the right of Israel to live within secure and recognized borders."

That is a lie, as usual, and an attempt to use things to his advantage, while maintaining his basic rejectionist position. To my knowledge, Crown Prince Abdullah has not yet recognized the right of Israel to live within secure and recognized borders. What he and the Summit did was an expression of sincere readiness to do so and to establish a normal relationship with Israel, provided that Israel accepts a complete withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967. That definitely could not be described as an extremist demand.

The Prime Minister goes on to speak about what he is going to do when Secretary Powell arrives and about his intention to advance "the initiative I am presenting here today for a meeting of regional leaders which will jumpstart the steps of dialogue for a framework of peace in the Middle East": another gimmick. The Palestinians are not the party now; they are actually the problem, since Arafat is a man with whom we cannot deal. So, now we have to deal directly with the Arab leaders: another attempt to play further games without any acceptance of the necessity of "concessions" from the Israeli side. That is the important and positive statement referred to by the Israeli representative today.

Finally, I, of course, noted that a reference was made to a draft resolution, and a comment on the advisability of such a text. I definitely see the logic. Nevertheless, the central aim of the draft resolution which the Council will be considering is to deal with the appalling humanitarian crisis which exists on the ground and with the need for the Council to deal with it, in addition to at least the initial acceptance of the idea of an international presence, which, I think, many members of the Council said would be of great help. And in the meantime, of course, there is no escape from dealing with the fact that Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) have not been implemented.

Many speakers have made very important proposals in the past. The representative of Mauritius, for instance, made an important proposal today. The representative of South Africa repeated proposals that are also important. We hope that the Council will be in a position to consider those proposals.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of Israel has asked for the floor, and I call on him.

Mr. Jacob (Israel): I regret the tone and the content of the statement just made by the Palestinian Observer. In view of the fact that his statement was well prepared, I particularly regret the use of terms such as "silly" and "stupid". I believe that we should conduct the business of this important body in a parliamentary manner. The terms he used are not in line with the parliamentary manner.

My delegation reserves the right to make an additional intervention tomorrow in response to some of the allegations raised by the Palestinian Observer.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I propose now to suspend the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 6.50 p.m.

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4510th meeting

Tuesday, 9 April 2002, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zínser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question

Letter dated 6 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/359)

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The meeting resumed at 10.45 a.m.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Thayeb (Indonesia), Mr. Sharma (Nepal) and Mr. Manalo (Philippines) took the seats reserve ' for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I would like, at the outset, Sir, to express my delegation's great satisfaction at seeing you presiding over the Security Council, and to express the confidence and hope that my delegation places in your effective and wise leadership of its work in the month of April, when the Council is facing so many challenges and when peoples subjugated to foreign occupation are appealing to it to render justice and ensure the triumph of the rule of law.

Our gratitude goes also to the representative of Norway, whose leadership was needed until the very last moments of his presidency because of scorching and pressing events. Those events then forced the Council, just three days after it had demanded Israel's immediate withdrawal from the Palestinian territories it had invaded, to meet again to consider the further deterioration of a situation that cast into a horrendous situation hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians delivered up to an arbitrary army of aggression that ignores the most basic norms of international humanitarian law and that seems to have established brutality as a code of conduct.

Indeed, it is as if the adoption of the Council's resolution had freed that army from all constraints: deaf to the Council's demands, it applied itself with even greater fury to invading the remaining Palestinian enclaves — most recently the Dura area, on Monday night and into Tuesday, slaughtering dozens of unarmed civilians who had nothing but their bare chests to oppose it, destroying houses and infrastructure, attacking the most sacred Islamic and Christian sites and opening fire without hesitation even on the Church of the Nativity.

In intolerable defiance of to the Council, the Sharon Government, has, in effect, interpreted Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), unanimously adopted, as authorizing it to complete its terror campaign and not to begin the withdrawal of its forces until all its objectives have been achieved. Everything seems to have been conceived, planned and organized with that in mind, and so that it could continue its operations without a care in the world.

The Israeli leadership is demonstrating such arrogance and is indeed humiliating the Security Council, whose authority is now being openly challenged. The Council must therefore respond and must react firmly and with the necessary resolve to this unacceptable attack on its credibility.

What tremendous courage is being displayed by an Israel army drunk with power and with the military superiority that is crushing an unarmed people under the weight of bombs. But its brutal force will never break that people's spirit or erode its faith in the justice of its sacred cause.

It is so hypocritical, following suicide attacks on which the Palestinian Authority has unambiguously spoken out, scornfully to equate them with the exemplary and heroic resistance of a people whose children, whose childhood has been stolen, have been reduced to fighting the most powerful army of occupation in the world by throwing stones with a courage that defies the imagination.

Rather, is it not the policy of systematic terrorism, of blind violence against unarmed civilians and even against the sick and the wounded and of savage destruction of homes, schools and hospitals that deserves to be called terrorism?

Where, then, is the sacred right of peoples to struggle against the occupier, which has been legitimized and immortalized by the heroic epics of patriots, freedom fighters and resistance fighters who live in the collective psyche of American, African,

Asian and European peoples? Or are we to understand that a double standard is in operation here? Is there now good resistance and bad resistance — good terrorists and bad terrorists?

Today, the Security Council is called on to act with a heightened sense of urgency. It cannot allow its authority to be flouted, and its credibility diminished in this manner. It cannot remain passive at a time when unspeakable tragedy is unfolding in full view. It must not allow the forces of evil, deaf to its injunctions and indifferent to its appeals, to pursue, methodically and with impunity, their destruction of Palestinian cities, burying the last hopes raised by the Beirut peace initiative. The credibility of the Council is at stake — as is the entire system of collective security, of which the Council is the pillar and cornerstone.

Before the Middle East definitively collapses into irreparable horror, the Council must rise to its responsibilities under the Charter, and bring Israel to compliance and compel it to abide by international law by fully, effectively and immediately withdrawing its forces and strictly respecting the standards of international humanitarian law, in particular the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and lifting the restrictions imposed on President Arafat. It must ensure protection for the millions of Palestinians who are exposed to the murderous folly of the Israeli forces of aggression and substitute the momentum of peace for the logic of war. That is the only way of protecting that extremely sensitive region of the world from catastrophe and the disastrous consequences for all of Israeli irredentism.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative Algeria for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Iraq. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Kadhe (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express the gratitude and appreciation of my delegation to you, Mr. President, for having convened yet another emergency meeting of the Security Council at the request of the Arab Group.

The Council is meeting for the third time in less than 10 days to consider criminal acts perpetrated by the Zionist entity against the people of Palestine. The Council has adopted two resolutions calling on the Zionist entity to halt its military campaigns. That entity, however, continues its brutal terrorist campaign against the Palestinians. It persists in killing and displacing them, destroying their homes, laying siege to their holy sites and using starvation as means of war.

It continues to besiege the headquarters of President Yasser Arafat and to bring military pressure to bear upon him with a view to killing him and his companions. In brief, the Zionist entity is committing acts of genocide and crimes against humanity.

As members know very well, under international law, any of the following acts constitute genocide: killing members of a group; causing serious bodily harm to members of a group; or deliberately inflicting on a group living conditions calculated to bring about, in whole or in part, its physical destruction. Crimes against humanity are defined as follows: the deliberate killing, annihilation, expulsion, forced transfer or detention of people, or severely depriving them of their liberty or freedom of movement, all of which run counter to the basic rules of international law.

The Zionist entity has committed all of those crimes. The Council is therefore called upon to act immediately, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and to adopt coercive measures against that entity. Failure to do so would mean that the Council is unable to maintain international peace and security in accordance with its Charter mandate. Should that happen, the very raison d'être of the United Nations would be called into question.

The crimes perpetrated by the Zionist entity against the Palestinian people are covered by the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Should it prove legally impossible to apply that Statute, the Security Council should consider the establishment of an ad hoc international criminal tribunal to prosecute the Zionist entity's criminals. Sharon and the military Chief of Staff, Mofaz, would be at the top of that list as a result of the war crimes and crimes against humanity they have committed in their brutal campaign in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Under common article 1 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, all States undertake to respect and to ensure respect for those Conventions. Member States, collectively and individually, are thus committed under international humanitarian law to adopt legal, diplomatic and coercive measures to bring

pressure to bear on the Zionist entity to respect those Conventions. Furthermore, those States are also duty-bound, under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which is part of customary international law, to shoulder their responsibility in defence of the Palestinian people.

Our respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and for international law prompts us to call on the Council to abide by its responsibilities under the Charter. The Zionist entity, however, has not respected Council resolutions, and the Council has been unable to ensure respect for the provisions of those resolutions. That has encouraged the Zionist entity to continue to violate all the rules of international law. We believe that the situation in Palestine will not improve as long as the British and United States Administrations continue their assistance to and support for the Zionist entity. That support is an attempt to crush the morale of the Palestinian people and to break the will of the Arabs, so that they will be forced to surrender to the Zionist-American alliance.

It is really unreasonable that compliance by the Zionist entity with international legitimacy is outside the abilities of the United States and Great Britain. While rallying support for this entity, and under these circumstances, the two Administrations once again raised the issue of the threat of striking at Iraq. The objective behind this has become well known; it is an attempt to divert the world's attention from condemning the crimes of the Zionist entity against the Palestinian people. It is also an attempt to terrorize States so that they will not shoulder their international commitments in respecting, and guaranteeing respect for, the rules of international law.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of Morocco. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, the Moroccan delegation is pleased to see you presiding over the Council for the month of April. All those who have frequented the United Nations know of your great experience in this house, and they are also aware of your personal commitment to peace. That is why, in these tragic times in the Middle East, we could not hope for a better President in the Security Council.

The day before yesterday, hundreds of thousands of Moroccans, coming to Rabat from all parts of the Kingdom, bore witness to their pain. These hundreds of thousands of Moroccans showed their pain with their hearts; they shared with Palestinians their tears and their sorrow. No human being could fail to share such suffering on seeing all these small children holding each other's hands, lost in the streets in Nablus or Bethlehem, taking home just enough food, in the midst of Israeli soldiers and of the roar of bombs coming from everywhere from the occupier's artillery.

Old people are hiding, cringing under the tables in the age-old casbahs. Human beings, monuments and religious symbols have been martyrized, violated, pillaged. The Palestinian resistance who die while going to recover the bodies of their compatriots, all the houses which have been burned, along with their inhabitants – all these images, and many others, have gone around the world, and they have deeply distressed the conscience of all. They have reminded the people of the world of the scenes and the tragedies we thought were gone forever.

These images give us pause, all of us — citizens, diplomats, officials, whatever our beliefs and our convictions. They would have startled the founders of the United Nations, those who drafted the Charter, and all of those who have joined the United Nations since and who have all declared themselves resolved to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, reaffirming their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equality of rights of men and women, and of nations large and small. Of course I am referring here to the Preamble of the Charter.

Heedless of all that, Mr. Ariel Sharon continues his war. He has even stated that he found himself at the point of no return and that he would not go back to the situation which prevailed before operations were launched. One could not be any more clear. The Israeli Prime Minister has chosen to defy the whole world — the Security Council, its permanent members and international public opinion. Thus far he has turned a deaf ear to all the Council's appeals and to your last statement, Mr. President, the one made during the weekend, and also to those of the major world leaders and, finally, to the appeal made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who still represents the legitimacy of the international community — Mr. Kofi Annan.

For Mr. Sharon, the Israeli army will withdraw only when it has accomplished its mission. Does this mean that it will continue this mission, making a mockery of all humanitarian law and of the existence of thousands of civilians, whom it is terrorizing daily, in full view of everyone? How can the Security Council accept that without questioning its own authority?

The Arab world held out the hand of peace in Beirut. Israel would be wrong in seeing in that nothing but an expression of weakness. It would be a serious mistake; it would be short-sightedness that might have tragic consequences. To continue to escalate repression and violence, with such disproportionate resources, is to commit the irreparable and to gravely jeopardize the future.

The Arabs want peace. They are prepared to live with the Israeli State. They have no disputes, historic or otherwise, with the Jews. They have shared tradition, culture and language with Jews for centuries. This peace, this hand which has been held out, must now be taken. Peace must begin with a forthright and worthy dialogue with Yasser Arafat, the legitimate leader of the Palestinian Authority.

Only yesterday, the King of Morocco, His Majesty King Mohammed VI, President of the Al-Quds Committee, was able to speak by telephone with President Arafat. He reminded the President of the support of the King of Morocco and of the Moroccan Government and people in the ordeal it has endured since the Israeli invasion.

It is indecent to isolate Yasser Arafat; it is indecent to threaten him illegally with deportation and then blame him for doing nothing to put an end to the hostilities. I should like someone to explain to me how one can isolate the head of the Palestinian resistance and then ask him to intervene to stop the hostilities. Yasser Arafat is the legitimate representative of his people, and confirm this, day after day. They die to testify to that. They proclaim it every day, risking their very lives. It is with Yasser Arafat that Mr. Sharon must begin a dialogue by forgetting old scores to be settled and the vicissitudes of other confrontations that are 20 years old. When one exercises the responsibility of head of State, one does not settle personal scores.

Throughout his life, Yasser Arafat has claimed nothing less than justice for his people. Today as yesterday, he has been met with force and repression. As the philosopher Blaise Pascal stressed, "Justice without force is powerless; force without justice is tyrannical". The exactions committed by the Israeli army are doing grave harm to the very values that Israel claims. When there is no justice, nothing remains but arbitrariness and tyranny. That is why, today, people are rising up to demand that the international community dispatch an interposition force to protect the defenceless Palestinian people and provide them with justice.

As we well know, we attach the same value to any human life, no matter whose it is. We condemn all acts against innocent civilians, whatever their provenance. Today, we pray that, at the end of the road, Palestinians and Israelis will live in peace with mutual respect.

The mission to the region begun yesterday by United States Secretary of State Mr. Powell, beginning with my country, is a first, tangible sign of hope for peace. Our most earnest desire is that Mr. Powell's efforts, through his contacts and the strength of his conviction, will succeed as soon as possible. The region awaits Mr. Powell with impatience. However, the fact remains that today, the Security Council itself is also in a position to give its support to the success of Mr. Powell's mission, by using all juridical means at its disposal — and the Council knows that it does have juridical means under the Charter — to require that Israel implement all Council resolutions, lift the siege imposed on Yasser Arafat, immediately end the bloodbath and withdraw from Palestinian cities that it is occupying illegally. Each day that passes brings new tragedy. We must act as swiftly as possible, because — to paraphrase the poet Saint-John Perse — inertia alone is a threat.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Morocco for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Spain, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Flores (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the EU — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association

countries belonging to the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.

In the past weeks, the EU has condemned in the strongest terms the relentless cycle of terror and violence that is afflicting the Israelis and the Palestinians. Today, we want to reiterate this message and to express our utmost concern at the continuing military operations in the Palestinian territories, the violations of international humanitarian law, and the increasing and alarming number of casualties among the civilian population.

The attempts to destroy the Palestinian Authority and its infrastructure, the isolation of Chairman Arafat, and the humiliation and confinement of the Palestinian civilian population are unacceptable and contrary to international law. Those actions and the disproportionate use of force must cease immediately. They are unjustified and do not serve Israel's legitimate fight against terrorism.

Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) must be implemented immediately. We deeply regret that they continue to be ignored, in particular the demands for an immediate cessation of violence, a meaningful and effective ceasefire and the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities and other areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority.

The lockdowns and restrictions on movement must end. There must also be an immediate end to President Arafat's isolation and lack of freedom of movement. The Palestinian Authority and its President, the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, must make every possible effort to stop the violence, dismantle all terrorist organizations such as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad and guarantee that those responsible for the most recent brutal terrorist attacks against Israelis do not go unpunished.

The EU is extremely concerned by the humanitarian disaster affecting the Palestinian population. In particular, we are concerned about news concerning the gravity of the humanitarian situation in Jenin and Nablus. We reiterate that actions against medical and humanitarian institutions and personnel are absolutely unacceptable and contrary to United Nations Conventions relating to the protection of civilians in armed conflict and to international humanitarian law. They must be able fully to perform their work and given full access to populations in need. We recall that both parties must respect international humanitarian standards and protect the lives of civilians.

The European Union stresses the importance of the vision contained in President Bush's statement on Thursday and in that regard welcomes the mission of Secretary of State Powell to the region in order to work with the parties to implement Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1402 (2002). The creation of a politically and economically viable Palestinian State, security guarantees for the State of Israel and the support recently offered by the League of Arab States for Crown Prince Abdullah's peace initiative are among the elements included in that vision that the European Union has long called for and strongly supports.

We urge both parties to cooperate fully with Secretary Powell, as well as with Special Envoy Zinni and others, to implement the Tenet work plan and the Mitchell report recommendations with the aim of resuming negotiations on a political settlement. We also urge the parties to accept an impartial monitoring mechanism. We are convinced that deploying observers on the ground will serve the interests of both parties. We stand ready to participate in such a mechanism.

The European Union continues to make every effort with the parties, the countries of the region, the United States, the United Nations and Russia to end a conflict that can have only a political solution. We look forward to the meeting of the "quartet" at the ministerial level, with the presence of the Secretary-General, scheduled to take place in Madrid tomorrow.

The special meeting of the ministers of the European Union on 3 April decided to send a high-level mission to the region to meet with Prime Minister Sharon, President Arafat and other relevant personalities on both sides. We regret that the Israeli Government refused to allow the European Union to meet Mr. Arafat, the elected President of the Palestinian Authority. It is essential that the "quartet" of special envoys be given full access to all parties. It is also imperative that diplomatic and consular representatives be able fully to perform their tasks, in particular as regards access to and protection of their own citizens in the territories.

To conclude, the European Union is extremely concerned at the volatile situation in the region and in

particular at the recent escalation of violence along the border between Lebanon and Israel. We call for an end to the violations of the Blue Line, condemn the recent attacks originating in Lebanese territory and call on all parties involved to show the utmost restraint.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Duval (Canada) (*spoke in French*): It is always an honour to speak before the Security Council, especially under your presidency, Sir, which benefits by your great experience.

We are discussing today an issue that has been on the Council's agenda for more than 35 years. In this tragic moment, I hope that the Council, its permanent members and the international community will bear in mind these very wise words of Jean François Paul de Gondi Cardinal de Retz:

> "To enact a law and not enforce it is to authorize that which we would prohibit."

Canada is deeply troubled by the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East. The Council has charted the way forward in resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). The elements of those resolutions are not conditional and there can be no justification for continuing to disregard them. Their immediate implementation has been called for in all quarters and can be deferred no longer. This is not only a political requirement; it is a humanitarian imperative.

As the situation continues to deteriorate, the rising toll of casualties and the deplorable humanitarian conditions of the Palestinians require the immediate implementation of all relevant resolutions. We call on Israel not only to respect the requirements of those resolutions, but also to facilitate the access of humanitarian workers and the delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need and to ensure that the Palestinian people have full and unhindered access to basic needs, including food, water and medical supplies. Canada is deeply concerned by reports detailing incidents in which clearly marked ambulances have been denied access to wounded civilians, delayed at checkpoints or, worse yet, fired upon. Israel should exercise the utmost restraint in order to avoid further civilian casualties. The Palestinian Authority should in turn commit itself to ending all terrorist acts, including suicide bombings that target innocent civilians and are an affront to humankind. Both parties should move immediately to a meaningful ceasefire.

As has been reiterated for many years now, there can be no military solution to this conflict. Continuing on the present course makes a peaceful resolution even harder to reach and risks destabilizing the entire region. The escalating tensions on the Israeli-Lebanese border and the continuing violations of the Blue Line are of serious concern and we call on all parties to demonstrate maximum restraint.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada has consistently affirmed that third-party monitors could serve both parties' interests in assisting with the implementation of a ceasefire agreement. Indeed, Canada recognizes that the urgency of the current situation makes consideration of this matter all the more pressing and we stand ready to assist the cause of peace in any way we can. We urge the parties to take the steps necessary to create an environment in which third-party monitors can play a constructive and consensual role. It is their responsibility.

Canada welcomes the direct engagement of United States Secretary of State Colin Powell, underlines its urgency and urges the parties to give him their full cooperation. We fully support all efforts, including those of the "quartet", aimed at achieving a ceasefire and the implementation of the Tenet plan, accompanied by the prompt resumption of negotiations towards a political solution and the implementation of the Mitchell Committee recommendations. The Security Council can help to establish a locus and a context for the two sides to navigate back from the precipice. We all know and understand the elements upon which a final settlement should be based. Negotiations by the parties aimed at achieving a political solution, and taking account of these elements, should be resumed without delay on the basis of earlier agreements.

In conclusion, it is our hope — if we are permitted any hope — that reports of the withdrawal of the Israel Defence Forces from Qalqiliya and Tulkarem are the beginning of the recognition by Israel of its responsibility under the Council's resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Canada for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Oman. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, and the Council members for your prompt response to the request made by the Arab Group to hold this meeting in order to consider the deteriorating situation in the occupied Arab territories.

Since the Council adopted resolution 1397 (2002) on 12 March, the Palestinian people have been subjected to a campaign of murder, siege and starvation by the Israeli forces of occupation. Despite the adoption by the Council of three resolutions calling on all concerned parties, particularly Israel, to implement a ceasefire and to withdraw all forces without delay, the demands and appeals have not been heeded. The Israel military machine persists in killing scores of Palestinian civilians, including the elderly, women and children.

Faced with such defiance and Israel's persistent disrespect for the Security Council resolutions, we would like to ask what measures the Council could take that would enable it to implement its resolutions regarding Israel. We would like to associate ourselves with previous speakers who have made it clear that the Council is being put to the test now, more than at any other time in the past. Either the Council proves to the world that it is acting without any double standards by forcing Israel to implement the relevant resolutions, or it remains silent, as has been the case in the past, and deals with Israel as if it were a country above the law and international legitimacy.

Such a situation cannot continue for long. We believe that it is necessary for the Council to act with a degree of responsibility to force Israel to implement relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 1402 (2002), requesting Israel to withdraw its forces from the territories under the control of the Palestinian Authority without delay. That means the immediate implementation of that resolution.

Military options, which impose solutions by force, are not an appropriate means to settle conflicts. The best testimony to that is that, in spite of the incredible pressure that Israel is exerting on the Palestinian people and its courageous leadership to make unreasonable concessions under the threat of force and weapons, that pressure has not broken the will of the Palestinian people or the will of its leadership, since their struggle against the occupation is legitimate and is very soundly grounded in international law.

We believe that a settlement to the conflict in the Middle East cannot be reached unless the parties are convinced of the usefulness of peaceful negotiations. In this regard, we call once again on all countries concerned, countries with influence, and on the Council to urge Israel to heed the call for peace by immediately stopping all acts of violence and withdrawing its forces from all Palestinian towns and villages; to arrange for necessary international protection of the Palestinian people without delay; to restart the peace process and reach a solution to the Middle East conflict through direct negotiations with the legitimate elected leadership of the Palestinian people, represented in the person of President Yasser Arafat and by the Palestinian Authority.

Even if Israel decides to withdraw its forces from Palestinian territories, we would still request that such withdrawal be immediate and from all areas that have been reoccupied. We do not consider this as a prompt response to the will of the international community. Rather, it is a very late response.

The Security Council should not stop at this, as if nothing has happened. We request that the Council consider the adoption of punitive measures against Israel and make it bear responsibility for all the bloodshed and destruction. The Council should also consider the steps necessary to provide protection for the Palestinians, as has already been stated by the representatives of Mauritius and South Africa.

This is the path to peace. Israel must choose between the path of peace, which ensures its right to live in peace, and the path of war, which can only lead to further violence and the killing of innocent people on both sides.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Oman for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Ecuador. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to congratulate the

Security Council on holding this open debate on the serious situation in the Middle East.

The Government of the Republic of Ecuador, deeply concerned over the escalating violence in the Middle East, supports the international community's appeal for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied territories and the immediate cessation of acts of violence on both sides, which, as we know, have caused so many innocent victims, in particular among the civilian population.

Ecuador, convinced that the only way of solving disputes is through peaceful negotiation, expresses its full support for recently adopted Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002).

The Government of Ecuador considers that these resolutions provide the legal and political elements that can bring about the resumption of peace negotiations along the lines provided for in the Tenet plan and the Mitchell recommendations.

In this context, the Government of Ecuador reiterates the appeal for peace made by President Gustavo Noboa in his notes of 5 December 2001 addressed to the Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, and to the President of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat. In his messages, President Noboa invoked the need to find a peaceful, lasting and equitable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Ecuador supports the initiatives of the United Nations, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States towards a negotiated settlement of the conflict. Ecuador especially welcomes the United States Government's dispatch to the region of a delegation at the highest level, led by Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Ecuador recognizes Israel's right to live within secure and recognized borders, according to international law, as well as the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to establish their own State, in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

As a multicultural and multi-ethnic country, Ecuador calls on Israel and Palestine to renounce violence in favour of relations of tolerance and respect for ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. Ecuador expresses special concern at the military operations being carried out at holy sites.

As we did previously in Geneva, on the occasion of the presentation of the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, I wish to affirm emphatically Ecuador's rejection of violations of human rights in the region.

Finally, I wish to express Ecuador's endorsement of statements on this issue by the Rio Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Ecuador for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Sudan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Once again in the space of 48 hours, the Council is meeting to consider the very serious and deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. At the outset, I would like to express our support for and agreement with the statement made by Tunisia on behalf of the Arab Group.

The war crimes that Israel, the occupying Power, is currently perpetrating in the occupied Palestinian cities, before the eyes of the entire world, are indeed among the worst crimes of genocide. What is happening now in the Jenin refugee camp — a scene of horrible carnage claiming the lives of hundreds of innocent civilians, including young people, women and children — and the killing of dozens of people in the old city of Nablus and in the vicinity of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem exemplify the continuing practices of oppression by the Israeli occupying forces against innocent civilians. These acts are blatant defiance of Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) and of all the Council's calls for the immediate cessation of acts of aggression and violence and for withdrawal from the Palestinian cities.

Israel's continuing defiance of Security Council resolutions and, more so, its having responded by increasing its aggression and oppression and by perpetrating more massacres against civilians require the Council to act immediately and to condemn Israel for non-compliance with the Council's resolutions. Those acts also require the Council to call upon Israel to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 1949, in the occupied Palestinian territories and to pressure Israel to stop impeding the transfer of the wounded and

the provision of humanitarian and medical assistance to those who need it as a result of Israel's barbaric daily bombings.

The extremely serious situation in the Palestinian territories requires immediate Council action to protect unarmed, innocent civilians in Palestine by deploying an international protection force as soon as possible. Any delay or prevarication in protecting Palestinian civilians would be a failure on the Council's part to assume its responsibilities under the Charter.

We welcome the visit of Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region and the statements made by United States officials, particularly those of President George Bush and Secretary Powell, calling on Israel to withdraw. However, we wish to recall the final communiqué of Arab Foreign Ministers meeting at Cairo on 6 April, which stated that the biased treatment accorded to Israel on the part of some States, particularly the United States, has led Israel to act as if it were above international law and United Nations resolutions. Such privileged treatment has encouraged Israel to pursue its aggressive policies and to threaten peace, security and stability in the region.

By pretending to withdraw from certain areas while simultaneously reoccupying other areas, Israel is playing a trick that fools no one. We are certain that the Council cannot be deceived by such a trick. The carnage of the last 12 days perpetrated daily by the Israeli occupying forces, the savage daily attacks and bombings of the refugee camp of Jenin and Nablus and the attack on the Church of the Nativity are criminal acts and pose a clear threat to international peace and security. They require the Council's immediate action under Chapter VII of the Charter in order to force Israel to implement Security Council resolutions immediately and fully, to end its aggression against the Palestinian people and against their rights, land and property, and to provide the Palestinian people with international protection.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): The situation in the Middle East, unfortunately, shows no sign of improvement. It is indeed a matter of concern to all of us that, despite repeated calls by the Council through its successive resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), the Israeli military operations in the Palestinian cities continue unabated. Numerous Palestinian towns and cities are suffering Israeli military occupation while civilian casualties are continuing to mount. This is blatant defiance of this world body and a challenge to its legal and moral authority.

If this trend continues, the Charter and the United Nations itself will lose their relevance as guarantors of international peace and security. We are dismayed that Israel has also not responded to President Bush's call for the cessation of its operations in Palestinian-controlled areas and the withdrawal from cities that it recently re-occupied. Let us hope that the visit of United States Secretary of State Colin Powell will produce some tangible results.

Enforceability of Security Council decisions cannot be allowed to be held hostage to the whims of the violators of its resolutions. It may perhaps be necessary now to move under Chapter VII.

Pakistan opposes violence of all sorts and on all scales. We urge its cessation. We also believe that the immediate stationing of international monitors in the region may be necessary not only to ensure the implementation of an effective ceasefire, but also to secure an immediate end to the spiralling cycle of violence and the protection of civilians, who have been the main and innocent victims of the violence in recent weeks and months.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Cuba. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for having convened this open meeting of the Security Council in response to the growing call of the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States, who are concerned about the continuation and the deepening of the crisis in the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the situation that once again brings us together today has not improved. To the contrary, it has worsened despite the appeals made by resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) and the trip of new envoys to the area.

The Israeli Government's disregard for everything we have discussed here over recent days fills us with indignation. Not even the little that is recorded in resolutions, which are diligently prepared to maintain so-called balance, is respected or taken into account.

The massacres continue. Repression continues. Threats to the physical integrity and the dignity of the President of the Palestinian National Authority, Yasser Arafat, continue. Arbitrary detentions, mistreatment and humiliation continue. Attacks against temples of different creeds continue. The tanks of the Israeli army continue to destroy houses, offices and the headquarters of the Palestinian National Authority in Ramallah and other cities in the West Bank.

The images of hundreds of children and young people with their hands bound, their eyes blindfolded and their heads hooded being taken to detention camps burst onto our television screens, despite the ferocious censure and manipulation of what is happening there. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian citizens continue to be surrounded by tanks while they are brutally attacked from state-of-the-art helicopter gunships or military equipment. And the Israelis still think that this is how the determination of an entire people will yield, a people who aspire only to living in peace in their own free and independent State.

We are going to speak very clearly and frankly. The credibility of the Security Council is on tenterhooks. If the situation continues like this, the Security Council must adopt broad and credible measures and must assume the authority and responsibilities assigned to it by the Charter of the United Nations.

How long is the Government of Israel going to mock Council resolutions and the calls and demands of the overwhelming majority of the international community? How long is it going to play unscrupulously with the lives of millions of human beings? If this situation continues to deteriorate, will we have to come here one day to make speeches condemning the use of weapons of mass destruction against concentrations of Palestinian people or against Arab neighbouring countries?

Of course, this disregard for what we do in this forum on behalf of the overwhelming majority of Member States is based on the absolute certainty and confidence provided by the indecent umbrella of the use or the threat of the use of the veto by one permanent member. That member uses it undemocratically every time something is supposedly done — even if just the touch of a rose petal — that might affect the Israeli regime: that country to which some attach the label of democracy, despite so many abuses that are committed in the illegally occupied Arab territories and despite its flagrant and ongoing failure to comply with many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, whose paper has yellowed in archives where they await implementation.

Israel's disregard for what we do will persist while the alleged mediators, who may be effective in negotiations, continue to maintain deceitful and unbalanced stands when they speak with the conflicting parties. It is impossible to accept that somebody may be an honest and credible mediator while being both judge and party, when he or she gives unlimited support to all the atrocities committed or supports militarily, politically and economically, with enormous subsidies estimated to be around $5 billion annually, a military and political machine trained and ready to kill and plunder with hatred and brutality, using the alleged pretext of defending its nation and ensuring its national security. Unfortunately, timid voices can still be heard in the Council appealing to the parties as if they were fighting on an equal footing. How much longer will this despicable blindness continue?

I call on the members of the Security Council and of the United Nations as a whole: let us do away with hypocrisy and rhetoric; let us leave diplomatic formalities on one side. These massacres must be brought to an end. The Government of Israel must be compelled to abide by the provisions of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and to respect minimum rules of coexistence and behaviour among States. Specific and effective action — not half-measures — must be taken. This should include the immediate dispatch of an impartial international force — I stress the word "impartial" — mandated by the Security Council to ensure compliance with a ceasefire and to demand the effective withdrawal of the Israeli army from the Palestinian cities. State terrorism must be brought to an end. All — not just some — of the human rights of the Palestinian people must be respected, including their most precious right, the right of which they are deprived every day: the right to life.

Cuba will not cease to denounce, strongly and loudly, the crimes committed against Arab peoples,

especially against the Palestinian people. Cuba will not cease to denounce the daily manipulation and distortion of the situation. Cuba will continue to denounce the double standards used in this Council — a Council that is rendered impotent by the threat or the use of the veto.

One day soon, justice will be done, and a just and lasting peace will be achieved in the Middle East region for the benefit of all the peoples who live there. Meanwhile, we will continue to denounce and condemn the failure to act and the impunity with which resolutions, the principles of the Charter, international law and international humanitarian law are violated. We will also speak, fearlessly and frankly, with right on our side, with total independence and with faith that justice will overcome iniquity.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express my gratitude and appreciation to you, Mr. President, for having implemented the first provision of rule 48 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council for the second time in one week, thereby enabling the membership of the United Nations, on whose behalf the Council speaks, to be present in the Council Chamber while the Council carries out its work before the eyes of the world, rather than behind closed doors, as if it were scheming.

We are not, of course, surprised that you, Mr. President, should have done so. Not only are you greatly experienced, but you are, without doubt, the unrivalled dean of the Council and the representative who is most knowledgeable with regard to the rules, whether written or unwritten. We learned about the unwritten rules only after the end of the previous international balance of power.

I should like first of all to make one observation before moving on to the heart of the matter — although this observation, too, goes to the heart of the matter. The fact that the Council is considering this issue under an agenda item that refers to the "Middle East" prompts me to note that there is no such geographical region. There is a region of the Far East and one of the Near East, but there is no region called the "Middle East". If we refer to the region in question as the "Middle East", then where is the Near East? I hope someone can enlighten me on that question. The truth is that it was an invention, created in London with the purpose of avoiding the need to use the word "Palestine". "Palestine" was replaced with "Middle East" — and these are the unfortunate consequences.

What I regret most of all is that the Arabs themselves use that term very frequently; they have been taken in by the trick. There is no region called the Middle East, whether considered from a historical or a geographical perspective. If anyone has proof of the existence of such a region, I would be willing to listen. Even political administrations and the foreign ministries of certain States still refer to the region as the "Near East". Some companies refer to the Near East, banks refer to the region as the "Near East". The Middle East does not exist; the only purpose of inventing such an expression was to replace the word "Palestine".

The question is that of Palestine, not of the Middle East. This question has to do with the occupation of Palestinian territory, the expulsion of its people and their replacement by foreigners. This is a problem of occupation, and it cannot be resolved unless we look at it as such. Any other solution will not be permanent and will never lead to peace. Even if such a solution did achieve peace temporarily, it would not be a permanent peace. That is a historical fact.

What has taken place in the past, and what is taking place now, will not be prevented by mediation, appeals or resolutions. It will require serious action by the Security Council — action that lives up to its name. Given the current international balance of power, the Council has become incapable of facing up to such problems.

The Palestinians are told that they must put a stop to the terror; we can only respond by saying that that demand must be addressed to the greatest terrorist organization in the world: the Israeli army. The Palestinians are defending themselves, their honour, their territories and their property; they are defending their right to live on their own territory. Palestinians have not come from all over the world to carry out terrorist acts on their own territory, where they themselves live. The occupier has come to kill them, to destroy their homes and to besiege them, cutting off power, water and food.

Yet there are some within and outside this Chamber who say that Mr. Arafat must make a greater effort. What is left for Mr. Arafat to do? He lacks electricity, water, food and medicine. He can no longer do anything. Neither Arafat, nor anyone else — not even prophets or angels, were they to appear again in Palestine — can prevent someone from avenging the murder of his father, his brother, his son, his mother, or his grandparent, or the destruction of his home.

Moreover, Arafat's leadership is not in question or the subject of any resolution. His leadership is historic, to which he was elected. Did anyone ever question the legitimacy of General De Gaulle when he was fighting the occupation of France? Of course not, because the rest of the free French Resistance chose him to assume that role. When he entered Paris, he and the other Resistance fighters were received as heroes. Did anyone question the legitimacy of George Washington when he acted against the colonialists to liberate the United States of America? Of course not.

The same reasoning applies to Arafat's leadership. His legitimacy is rooted in history; it is the legitimacy of one who is liberating his country, exactly as General De Gaulle and George Washington liberated their countries from occupiers. Arafat, dead or alive, will remain a hero in history. No one but President Arafat and the Palestinian people has the right to do anything about that. Although he led the Palestinian revolution and established the liberation forces in Palestine, today he is being called upon to make a greater effort.

Now I should like to make another very important point. Who in the region is calling for peace, and who is calling for war? The Arabs are calling for peace; the Muslims are the advocates of peace. To us, peace is one of the attributes of God and one of his beautiful names. That is why, when someone names a child Abdul-Salam, it means "Servant of God, peace". A Muslim does not attack others by words or actions; he harms no one by words or actions. That is the meaning of Islam. I refer the Council to all the Arab efforts and initiatives to achieve peace. Likewise, I refer the Council to those who have undermined those peace initiatives. I will not state my country's opinion, but I will read from an article by Uri Avneri, an Israeli journalist, that appeared in the 13 March issue of *Muslim International*, volume 52. I have an English version of the article, and I will ask the Secretariat to distribute it to the Council.

In the article, entitled "How Can the Saudi Initiative be Undermined or Exploded?", Mr. Avneri goes back through history and finds that Israel has always destroyed peace initiatives in three stages. The first stage is denial. Secondly, once the effort has been denied, it is distorted; and thirdly, the initiative is liquidated. That is how Sharon's Government is dealing with the current initiative; it is the way that successive Israeli Governments have undermined all peace efforts for the past 53 years.

We should not doubt for a moment that all Israeli Governments have been against peace. They have all worked against it. Their first stage, denial, is designed to diminish the importance of whatever initiative has been introduced. Israel will say that the initiative brings nothing new to the table — that it is only a political trick to gain tactical advantage. If the initiative has been made by an Arab, the Arab will be accused of intending it only for the consumption of the international community, not for that of his own people. In a nutshell, such a peace initiative means that the Arab in question is not to be taken seriously.

In using this strategy, Israel will concentrate on one particular word, as we will show. Before the October war of 1973, President Sadat made a comprehensive peace offer, but Golda Meir rejected it immediately, because her experts discovered that Mr. Sadat had used the Arabic word for "peace" and not the word for "conciliation". The price of that word claimed the lives of thousands of Egyptian soldiers.

The same strategy is being applied to the Saudi initiative. First of all, it has been said that Crown Prince Abdullah spoke of that initiative with a United States journalist but did not announce it to his own people. When it was discovered that the Saudi and British press had widely reported the initiative, a new pretext was given: that the Saudis had submitted the offer because they were no longer popular in the United States in the light of angry American reaction to the events of 11 September. Consequently, and I am quoting Uri Avneri, "Crown Prince Abdullah was no longer a true Zionist".

Then the Israelis will move to the second phase to deftly circumvent the initiative. They will say that they do not refuse the initiative, but welcome the positive spirit in which it was offered, and then throw the ball outside their court. It would then seem logical for them to ask for a clarification of the offer. When there is a

difference between two peoples, they should meet to discuss the matter and put an end to their differences.

This sounds very logical, but they are also trying to destroy the offer at the same time. Every Arab offer or initiative is based on the restoration of the territories in return for the normalization of relations, but several Arab offers have fallen into the same trap. Mr. Ben-Gurion asked to meet with President Muhammad Najib of Egypt and several Israeli ministers sought to meet with President Hafez Assad. Only President Sadat was clever enough to go to Jerusalem on his own initiative.

When the Security Council adopted resolution 242 (1967), it was rejected by the Israeli Government and accepted only when acceptance could no longer be avoided. The Israeli interpretation focused on the definite article "the", which did not appear in the English text calling for withdrawal from "occupied territories", not "the occupied territories", unlike the French text, which contained the definite article. Unfortunately, the Russian language does not have articles, definite or indefinite. The idea is to break the spirit of the Arabs little by little, giving various interpretations to any Arab offer and making conditions unacceptable to the other party so that the offer dies a slow death. That is what happened in Lausanne and to most peace initiatives emanating from Europe and America.

Following the first and second phases, the initiative is killed by force of arms, as Sharon did in the occupied Palestinian territories immediately after the Arab summit in order to liquidate the offer entirely. These are not my words, but those of Uri Avneri, a Jewish Israeli author. The Israeli Government usually employs two lethal weapons in its arsenal: the United States Congress and the American press. These, too, are the words of Uri Avneri, not mine. For instance, United States Secretary of State William Rogers suggested a peace plan involving Israel's withdrawal to the lines of 1967, but Israel brought out its weapons to quash the Rogers plan. Mr. Kissinger made his own attempt, which was also aborted.

Again citing Uri Avneri, I ask: Who are those calling for peace and who are those against it? We need only read Mr. James Baker's book *The Politics of Diplomacy* to learn how the occupation forces in Palestine made life miserable for the Administration in Washington. Another such book is entitled *They Dare to Speak Out*. Those who favour peace would not impose the conditions cited yesterday in *Al-Ahram*, a moderate Egyptian newspaper, in which Mr. Sharon was quoted as saying that Israel would not end its operations until resistance was crushed, that the refugees will not be allowed to return and that the borders of 1967 will not be restored. What sort of peace is it if the resistance is crushed and the refugees cannot return? If we cannot restore the 1967 borders, on what basis can negotiations be held? On what basis can agreement be reached?

I should like to assure the Council that the Arabs are the ones calling for peace. No one should believe for one moment that the occupation forces in Palestine desire or seek peace. They will destroy any peace offer, as Uri Avneri has claimed. It is not true that there is a democratic Government in Israel. It is a Government passed down from one general to another. It is a Government of generals and military commanders with experience in only one arena — war, which they wage tirelessly.

Now we come to the Security Council. What is the role of the Security Council if it is indeed to be considered a council for international security? Two days ago, a demonstration was held in Rabat, Morocco, in which the press reported 3 million people to have participated. One female participant in that massive demonstration was quoted on the Al-Jazeera network as shouting:

> "Down with international resolutions! Down with international instruments! Down with the Security Council!"

What could bring a Moroccan woman to say such a thing? It was her understanding that the Council is very quick to adopt resolutions under Chapter VII when Muslims and Arabs are involved, but that resolutions under Chapters VI and VII are never adopted when Israel is involved. Indeed, the resolution recently adopted is vacuous, mere words. A plain statement of the President of the Security Council would have been enough, as some have claimed. We know the reason for this. Council members of the free world defend liberty, but the Council is not even free to adopt its own resolutions. It is subcontracted for the occupation of Palestine. Cuba and Libya are truly free because we express our real opinions here. We are the true free people; we are the independent ones.

One million people also participated in a demonstration in Yemen. Millions from the universities

in Cairo, Egypt, have also demonstrated. The artists of Egypt have collaborated on a work of art that has taken the Arab streets back to the early 1960s. Demonstrations have erupted in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. If anything positive has come from this horrible invasion, it is that the Arab streets and cities have recovered their zeal and dignity. Sooner or later, in days, months or years, what is happening in Palestine will have repercussions on the Arab positions. I say this now and the truth of my words will emerge in the future.

The Security Council should attempt to salvage some of its credibility — I do not say all its credibility, as that would be difficult given the balance of power in the world today. How can Chapter VII be applied against Libya, the Sudan, Iraq, Iran and other countries and not against those who are killing, destroying homes and conducting assassinations on the streets of Palestine with impunity? The events in East Timor caught the Council's immediate attention. Is it not interested in what is happening in Palestine? Is the Council not moved by the killing of children; the embargo of food assistance and medicine; attacks by air, tanks and artillery; the arrest of people in their own homes? Where are human rights? Are the Palestinians and Arabs not human and therefore without rights? The Council stands accused. Can it claim innocence? It is no longer an international Security Council. How much longer will the Council, which is responsible for international peace and security, remain silent and fail to deal with this issue as a matter of occupation? Applying the model of South Africa would be the solution and would allow this Council to recover its credibility and dignity, part of it at least.

We care about the United Nations. We want to strengthen and support the United Nations and the Security Council. We call on the Council to play its role and assume the responsibility conferred on it by the Charter.

We agree with what has been said by Cuba concerning double standards. This is true. My country was the first in the second half of the twentieth century to call for abolishing the right of veto. The veto is not a right; it is a privilege. And that is what we have called it. If the Council does not act quickly, I think that it will regret it.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Cengizer (Turkey): For the third time in a row, Turkey has aligned itself with the statements made on behalf of the European Union by the distinguished representative of Spain. These three statements constitute a righteous stance while reflecting a deeply worried state of mind. Indeed, the developments we have seen within the last 48 hours have only confirmed the seriousness of the situation. As a matter of fact, Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) have all spoken clearly on the ways of bringing the tragic situation in the Middle East to an end.

We are deeply disturbed at seeing the failure of Israel to implement these resolutions. Even after having heard the sentiments of the members of the Security Council and others who spoke yesterday, the Israeli Government is not taking the necessary action, while very disturbing news of what has taken place in Jenin and other refugee camps continues to reach the international community. The tanks should turn back from all Palestinian cities now.

The economic and social life of the Palestinians has been violently upset. We are very much concerned with the resultant humanitarian situation. We have to repeat that the human rights of the Palestinian people are being violated. The sight of blood in Palestinian cities and the refugee camps is unbearable. Even the needs of the sick and injured cannot be met as they wait for a healing hand. Such restrictions should be lifted.

That Chairman Arafat is robbed of his legitimate capacities worsens the plight of the Palestinian people. Under the circumstances, the Israeli action seems to have been exactly what the radical elements in the region have been looking for. We must not let them succeed. This is another reason why we cannot accept the ferocity of the Israeli action: with its radicalism, it breeds the same.

In this Chamber, Turkey has urged the international community, and in particular the United States, to intervene at the earliest possible moment. It

goes without saying that we continue to hope for Secretary of State Colin Powell's success in addressing the urgent need of a credible and constructive intervention that will lead the parties out of this quagmire. But the parties should also be led beyond that urgent need.

What has happened, and what is right now happening, must not happen again. Simply, the terrain must be cleared for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution in the Middle East where all the parties can live side by side and in assured security.

They know how to transcend this sterile fight. They should not waste this chance. They must be more forthcoming than they have been on issues that remain vital concerns for the other side. After all, the problem is not that each side is baffled as to what the other side wants. It is not a lack of knowledge about the legitimate concerns of the other side.

They must do more than pay lip service to peace. We have seen what paying lip service does. It enflames mistrust. It leads to outright conflict. It silences those who speak for peace. It puts those yet to be born under perennial danger.

The overarching objective remains the same. Soon, the Israelis and the Palestinians must start living side by side in their own respective States, in peace and security, within their internationally recognized borders. There must be no return to this despicable state of affairs in the region.

For this, Israel should address the heightened grievances of the Palestinian people and choose to become a more forthcoming partner of the Palestinians in fulfilling and attaining their legitimate rights.

The Palestinian side must respond positively and fully to the calls for a ceasefire. This it should do credibly, and show its determination to fight resolutely with terrorist elements. Terrorism cannot be glorified.

Security is the absolute right of Israel. Those who deny this right are the enemies of both the Israelis and the Palestinians, because they play for and bid for lasting enmity between these two peoples. They think they will gain when these two lose. They are radicals of every sort and creed.

Attacks from the Lebanese territories on Israel that violate the Blue Line are aimed at widening the area of conflict, and they are in breach of the relevant Security Council resolutions as well. This cowardly tactic cannot be allowed to function. The "quartet", as well as other facilitators, should remain seized of the matter, especially at a time when the ideas for some form of international presence are moving to the forefront of the agenda.

Clearly, the situation is dangerous and we need more than a thaw. We need efforts that bring the future of the region as a whole into perspective.

Turkey is ready to contribute to all efforts geared to working to the benefit of a brighter, more promising future in the region, and will continue to strive for this noble end.

Before I conclude, let me say this. We pray for those innocent souls from both sides that have lost their lives.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, I thank you for having convened another public meeting on the grave situation in the Palestinian territories.

Israel continues with its ruthless military campaign throughout the West Bank. By so doing it reveals once again its unlawful and aggressive nature, exposing it to the entire world. As has always been its practice, it is in flagrant breach of two more resolutions of the Security Council, which represents the will of the international community. Moreover, it defies international public opinion, which has widely expressed outrage at the atrocities committed recently by heavily armed Israeli troops against defenceless civilians.

Those Israelis who have orchestrated the ongoing carnage against the Palestinians must understand that they are engaged in a disgraceful war. They are engaging a people who have no tanks, no helicopters, no F-16s, not even anti-tank rockets. Those who arm to the teeth and unleash an army against civilians are war criminals, and those who have armed and equipped such a reckless army cannot shun responsibility. We believe that the international community should begin to take necessary steps with a view to bringing war criminals to justice. The International Criminal Court,

which is to take effect soon, is an appropriate mechanism to consider taking up this issue.

The policy of the Israeli regime has always consisted of driving the Palestinian people into desperation and hopelessness. Along this line, the Israelis never meant to abide by the terms of the agreements they signed with the Palestinians. While they have ostensibly committed themselves to the so-called land for peace agreement, they have not stopped building Jewish settlements in the West Bank and in Gaza since 1993. The significant increase in the population and in lands under unlawful Jewish settlement in those areas over the past nine years, including 34 new Jewish settlements last year, attests to the fact that the Israelis have never been serious about the agreements they signed with the Palestinians. In other words, the Israeli regime has continued to colonize the territory from which they had ostensibly negotiated to withdraw.

Similarly, the Israeli regime, after years of foot-dragging, has now come to drop the empty pretence of seeking peace. The Israeli army is out to wipe out all Palestinian institutions and destroy the nine-year-old process. This especially serves the ideological goal of the faction currently in power in Israel. Moreover, by invading the Palestinian areas and restoring ruthless tactics the Israelis create more hate, thereby setting the stage for more Palestinian resistance and more violence.

The aggressive Israeli policy applies to Lebanon as well. The Lebanese Government has brought to the attention of the Secretary-General the almost daily violations of its border by Israeli armed forces over the past two years. Israeli aircraft breaking the sound barrier over Lebanese towns and villages is just one routine example of such cross-border violations, which amount to bullying tactics, threatening adjacent countries. Both regional Governments concerned stress that resolution 425 (1978) has not been implemented in full. It is not necessary to recall that the partial Israeli pullout from southern Lebanon took place only after years of heroic resistance by the Lebanese people. I hereby reject the allegations by the Israeli representative in this Council and assert that my Government has nothing to do with the situation along the Blue Line.

Not only does the Israeli army continue with the massacre of the Palestinians, but in the process it also flouts all provisions of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and particularly those that ban indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force, as well as humiliating treatment of civilians and attacks on holy places. Under such circumstances not only do the Israelis show contempt for resolution 1402 (2002) ten days after its adoption, and resolution 1403 (2002), but there are also indications that they plan to continue their invasion for many weeks, if not months, to come.

We believe the Security Council should not stand idly by and let its authority erode. It is time for the Council to act more resolutely and demand, under Chapter VII of the Charter, compliance with its resolutions, and the establishment of an international force to provide basic protection for the defenceless Palestinian citizens.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation wishes to thank you, Mr. President, and members of the Council, for convening this urgent meeting to consider the grave situation in Palestine, on which my delegation feels compelled to address the Council once again.

The situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has deteriorated further since the Council last met. The onslaught by Israel's military machine against the Palestinian people and their leadership continues relentlessly, leaving death and destruction in its wake. Ambassador Al-Kidwa of Palestine yesterday informed the Council of the latest developments, many of which have been corroborated by media reports. In short, the situation is extremely critical and demands immediate action by this Council.

The Council adopted resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) in an effort to calm the explosive situation. But much to the regret of my delegation — and, I am sure, of the members of the Council as well — Israel has chosen to ignore them. In defiance of the repeated calls of the Council, Israel presses on with its ruthless invasion of Palestinian territories. It ignores even the repeated calls of its friends, including the United States, to desist from further military action and to withdraw its troops immediately from Palestinian towns and cities that it had occupied.

Reports now indicate that there appears to be a partial withdrawal from two Palestinian areas, Tulkarm and Qalqiliya, but these may well be temporary, tactical moves to ease the pressure from the Council and the international community. These partial withdrawals are not acceptable. The Council must make it plain to Israel that it expects immediate and full withdrawal. Withdrawal should not be contingent on what is operationally expedient for the Israeli army. It is a legal requirement imposed by the Council on a Member State of the Organization and must be heeded.

It is therefore incumbent on the Council to exert its authority fully and effectively and to demand that Israel comply forthwith with resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). Should Israel continue to ignore the request of the Council, the Council should seriously consider taking appropriate punitive measures against it, as provided for in the Charter.

The Islamic Foreign Ministers, in their meeting in Kuala Lumpur, called for sanctions against Israel. Any other State daring to defy the Council would have been severely dealt with. That is the only recourse left to the Council to bring Israel to its senses and to get it to abandon its military option for one of negotiation, in the interest of a lasting peace in the area. For the sake of the people of Palestine, and for its own sake, the Council must act promptly and decisively; it does not have the luxury of time. Appeals that fall on deaf ears will not enhance the authority of the Council. My delegation entirely agrees that what is needed now is not more statements or resolutions but concrete action by the Council to back up its resolutions. Israel must be told that the Council means business and that it expects to see the immediate and full withdrawal of Israeli troops from the areas it has occupied in recent weeks. It must be told to begin the peace process in earnest.

My delegation looks forward to the efforts by the United States Secretary of State Colin Powell. We hope he will meet with all the principal actors, not the least of whom is President Arafat. President Arafat is the acknowledged and elected leader of the Palestinian people. He should be treated with the dignity and respect that his office deserves. He should not be demonized and shunned, but should be taken seriously as an important, indeed indispensable, interlocutor in the peace process. We should all remember that it was not President Arafat who precipitated this 18-month-long crisis, but Mr. Sharon, with his deliberately provocative visit to the Al-Aqsa compound. It is ironic indeed that Mr. Arafat, who has made so many efforts in the search for peace since Madrid and Oslo, is the one being demonized and sidelined, when we all know that this second intifada was precipitated by that provocative visit by Mr. Sharon.

Israel's intransigence in the face of the direct requests of the Council is a direct challenge to the authority of the Council. It can be ignored only at the expense of the Council's credibility, which is now at stake. Israel's continued defiance would constitute a rude rebuff and a humiliation of the Council, which the international community cannot accept. The impassioned speeches made in the Council on this issue attest to this. They must move the Council to action.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Jordan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your concern and your quick response to the request to convene this emergency meeting to consider the continuing crisis and the deteriorating situation in our region.

The Israeli escalation, seen in the acts of aggression committed by the occupying Power against the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority, particularly in the Jenin and Nablus camps, represents a criminal act of aggression — and an ugly one, indeed. We strongly condemn this act of aggression and remind the Israeli Government that its actions in the occupied Palestinian territories are a stark violation of international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. That fact has already been mentioned by the Council.

The time has come for the Israeli Government to realize that the military option is not a solution to any crisis. Escalation and violence breed further escalation and violence and lead to further broadening of the gap between the Israeli and Palestinian sides. Therefore, Jordan stresses that a political solution is the only way to overcome the crisis.

We call on the Israeli Government to implement Security Council resolution 1402 (2002) and immediately to withdraw all its forces from the territories and cities it has reoccupied. We also call on

the Israeli Government to lift the siege imposed on the Palestinian people and leadership and to begin implementation of the Tenet plan and the Mitchell recommendations in preparation for the resumption of final status negotiations from the point at which they were left off.

My delegation once again calls on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities under the Charter by forcing Israel to implement promptly the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 1402 (2002). We also call on the Council to work towards sending an international force to protect the Palestinian people.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gopinathan (India): We thank your delegation, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to discuss the ever-worsening situation in the occupied territories, which is a growing cause of acute concern and deep distress for all of us. Since 29 March, we have made two statements on this agenda item, setting out our position before the Council. I shall therefore be brief.

The statement recently made by Peter Hansen, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which underlines the grievous situation of civilians in the Balata and Jenin refugee camps, is indeed extremely distressing and speaks for itself. Israel's military actions against innocent civilians will in no way serve its best interests or provide the security it seeks for its people. In fact, the consequences will be to the contrary. There can be no justification for directing violence at innocent civilians.

Resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), recently adopted by the Security Council, provide a road map for the restoration of normalcy. We once again call upon both parties to implement those resolutions. Israel must withdraw its forces from the occupied territories immediately, and there should be a ceasefire followed by the resumption of negotiations. That is the clearly expressed and uniform sentiment of the international community.

We understand that the Security Council met with the Permanent Representative of Israel and the Permanent Observer of Palestine yesterday. We hope that this interaction will contribute to the immediate implementation of the Council's resolutions and will pave the way for the resumption of dialogue and negotiations, so that the people of Israel and the people of Palestine can live side by side within secure and recognized borders, also paving the way for lasting peace in the region.

In our earlier statements, we emphasized that President Arafat, who enjoys wide support and respect, is the symbol of Palestinian nationhood. His well-being and safety are also of paramount concern to the international community. We reiterate that all restrictions placed on him should be lifted forthwith to enable him to play his rightful role.

Another cause of serious concern is the continued violations of the Blue Line. These risk further exacerbating the situation in the region. They also pose a threat to United Nations peacekeepers. We urge that the violations be brought to an end immediately and that the sanctity of the Blue Line be respected.

The situation in the Middle East is frighteningly grave. On 7 April, the Council called on the parties to cooperate fully and in good faith with ministers and Special Envoys of the "quartet" and with the Secretary-General, especially in the context of the forthcoming visit of the United States Secretary of State to the region. We urge the Security Council to work assiduously with the parties concerned to bring to an immediate end to the violence that has engulfed the region and which could have very far-reaching consequences. We convey to the Council our full support in its endeavours.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Yemen. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Ashtal (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): Just a few days ago my delegation and many other delegations called on the Council to assume its responsibility, to deter Israeli aggression against Palestine and to put an end to the attacks by the bloodthirsty Israeli military apparatus on the defenceless Palestinian people. The Council thus adopted resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). Both resolutions have practically been rejected by Israel and it has not implemented them. We have repeatedly warned of the seriousness of the delay in ending the

ongoing and escalating Israeli aggression at a time when it has been clear that some members of the Council have been prepared to accept Israel's deceitful claim that its military offensive is a war against terrorism.

It has become clear today to everyone of sound mind that these were false, deceitful claims. The Israeli forces are besieging entire Palestinian towns and villages. They are showering defenceless civilians with missiles and heavy artillery, without distinguishing between children, youth and the elderly. They are demolishing houses and the infrastructure in a barbaric way. They are preventing water, food and medicine from reaching the entire population and are impeding ambulances from reaching the injured. They are firing at media representatives who are attempting to convey an honest picture of what is happening there.

There is Israel, a country that claims to be peaceful and democratic: a country whose Prime Minister has the audacity to claim that he wants peace, even over the dead bodies of Palestinian children; that he wants security for Israel, even at the expense of the future fate of the Palestinians. We do not know what kind of peace the Israeli Government claims to seek while it continues its barbaric aggression, its destruction of the infrastructure in the Palestinian areas and of the institutions of the Palestinian Authority and its liquidation of the majority of the Palestinian leadership.

We might also wonder how, after all this, anyone can go back to peace negotiations, as Sharon claims is possible. Negotiations over what and with whom? It is clear that Israel has interpreted the Security Council's failure to implement resolution 1402 (2002), requesting it to put an immediate end to its aggression, as a lack of will and the inability to implement that resolution. The thuggery of the Israeli forces reflects that interpretation and confirms beyond any doubt that the Israeli Government does not give any weight to the Council and does not respect its resolutions. It seems to us that some members of the Council have forgotten that the policy of appeasement attempted by the British Government to further deter Nazi aggression against Central European countries before the Second World War actually failed to deter that aggression at its inception.

The Security Council is called upon today more than ever to immediately and firmly take concrete and effective measures to put an end to the massacres being carried out by the Israeli forces, which are killing scores of defenceless Palestinians daily. We call upon the Council, in addition to simply implementing its resolutions, to oblige Israel to respect the legal agreements reached with the representatives of the Palestinian people. It should abide by its legal and moral commitments in accordance with human rights agreements, particularly the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949. We also call for Chapter VII of the Charter to be invoked against Israel if it refuses to implement Security Council resolutions and if it persists in its behaviour. We also wish to request the dispatch of international peacekeeping forces to the Palestinian areas.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Mauritania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ould Deddach (Mauritania) (*spoke in Arabic*): For the second time in less than a week we are meeting in unpleasant circumstances, except that I am given the opportunity for a second time to express my thanks to you, Mr. President, for your prompt response to the request of the Arab Group to hold this open meeting of the Security Council, which is devoted to dealing with the very serious and deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. Bearing in mind that deteriorating situation, this meeting is additional proof of the fact that resolutions of international legitimacy must be implemented, as embodied in the Security Council resolutions relating to the Palestinian question, in particular resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002).

It is indeed regrettable that the Security Council should be holding consecutive meetings in order to reaffirm and insist on the implementation of resolutions it has previously adopted.

Since there is a dire crisis threatening the Palestinian people, from a humanitarian point of view, the refusal to implement Security Council resolutions and the ensuing grave developments call for immediate intervention to protect the defenceless Palestinian people. This will be a test of the Council's credibility and will require it to assume its responsibility in accordance with the Charter of the Organization.

Compliance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949 should be among the Council's main priorities. It should demand that humanitarian services not be impeded and that they be able, unconditionally, to reach the Palestinian people.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania wishes to express once again its full solidarity with the brotherly Palestinian people and with the symbol of their struggle, President Arafat. We call upon the Council to adopt measures that are in keeping with its responsibilities and with the needs of the situation, which brooks no further delay.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, to thank you wholeheartedly, Mr. President, for having responded so quickly to the request to convene this urgent meeting. We hope that the outcome of this meeting will meet the challenge posed by the worsening situation and the exceptional events taking place inside the occupied Palestinian territories.

This is the eighth meeting that has been convened by the Security Council on an emergency basis in less than two weeks. The Council has been meeting to consider the grave, deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. War crimes, massacres, genocide, arbitrary detention and wanton destruction are continuing at the hands of the Israeli army, whose forces are armed with the most dangerous weapons, including some that are internationally banned — weapons that are being used against the defenceless Palestinian population.

The Security Council has adopted resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), all of which call upon Israel to put an end to its acts of aggression against the Palestinians and to withdraw without delay from their territories, which it has recently reoccupied by force. Regrettably, however, the Israeli Government, in keeping with its position in recent decades, has blatantly ignored its legal commitments, including those set out in international instruments. It has also ignored other international appeals for it to put an end to its gross violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people — violations that run counter to all the principles of international humanitarian law, including those of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 on the protection of civilians and their property in time of war.

Television channels and international news agencies yesterday carried a statement by the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, in which he publicly declared his determination to continue his bloody and infamous invasion of Palestinian lands and cities, justifying his actions by saying that the objectives of the invasion have not yet been met.

Once again, as with similar provocative and dangerous statements, the Israeli leader, who is known for his extreme, racist fanaticism against Palestinians and Arabs, has revealed the true intentions of Israel, not only to erode the Oslo Accords to a point of no return, thus preventing further negotiations aimed at achieving peace, but to attempt to impose another fait accompli through its illegal occupation of Palestinian territories. This is being done in what is called the security buffer zone deep inside the Palestinian territories, along the Green Line. Israel is continuing to kill or force out a large number of Palestinians in an attempt to achieve its ideological, expansionist and historical ambitions at the expense of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians, which include the establishment of the State of Palestine, as supported by General Assembly resolution 181 (II) and Security Council resolution 1397 (2002).

The lax approach of the Security Council and its failure to speedily address the grave developments in the occupied Palestinian territories since the desecration by Sharon of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 2000, or to heed the calls to dispatch an international force to protect Palestinian civilians have encouraged Israel to humiliate and isolate the Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, after having completely destroyed his headquarters.

Israel has persisted in its acts of aggression — acts that have metastasized, with the irresponsible and arbitrary ravaging of Palestinian cities and camps. It has committed the most heinous crimes — crimes of rape, murder and mass detention — particularly in the refugee camps of Jenin and Nablus. The bodies of hundreds of dead civilians are still strewn in the roads because people have been unable to bury them.

We therefore call upon the Security Council, as the body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, to take the necessary measures under Chapter VII of the Charter. Such measures should guarantee compliance by the Israeli Government with resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), as well as the speedy and unconditional implementation of all its legal, moral and political commitments to the Palestinian people, as agreed upon in the peace agreements.

In this respect, we also call upon the Security Council, in particular some of the most powerful members of the Council, to abandon their policy of double standards. That policy has led Israel to believe that it is above international law and internationally binding resolutions. That policy has encouraged Israel to persist in its hostile actions against the Palestinians and to directly threaten the peace and security of all the peoples and countries of the region.

The United Arab Emirates welcomed the statements made recently by the President of the United States, George Bush. President Bush called upon Israel to withdraw from all the Palestinian territories it had reoccupied. He also called upon Israel to put an end to the settlements and the siege imposed on the territories. The United Arab Emirates considers those statements to be a positive step towards peace. We therefore urge the United States to carry those constructive steps further by bringing more actual pressure to bear on the Israeli Government through the Secretary of State, who is currently visiting the region.

Israel must be pressured to end its brutal war crimes and torture of the Palestinians. We must work for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the Palestinian territories that were reoccupied. Israel must also lift the humiliating and unjust siege imposed on President Arafat and the towns, villages and camps that it invaded, using tanks, armoured vehicles and jet fighters.

We also call for the urgent dispatch of an international observer force to the Palestinian territories to protect the lives of Palestinians while guaranteeing safe access to those who provide relief supplies and to humanitarian and medical aid workers who need to reach the thousands of victims of the Israeli crimes.

In conclusion, we once again call upon the international community not to fall into the trap set by the Israeli Government's repeated attempts to compare what it is currently doing to the Palestinian people and cities with the actions of the United States in fighting international terrorism in the aftermath of the events of 11 September. We therefore affirm the need for the Council to distinguish between the terrorism pursued by the Israeli Government and the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to self-defence and to resist occupation until their territories have been liberated and an independent State has been established in independent Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and the relevant decisions of international legitimacy. Only then will we be able to uphold our credibility in working together at the international level to fight terrorism.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Lebanon. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Diab (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): In resolution 1402 (2002), the Security Council requested Israel to withdraw its forces from the Palestinian towns and villages that it had reoccupied. It called on Israel to seek peace by returning to the negotiating table. The Israeli response to that resolution was to escalate its acts of aggression against the Palestinian people, causing further death and destruction among Palestinian civilians. Within less than a week, in view of the seriousness of that escalation and Israel's intransigence in refusing to implement resolution 1402 (2002), the Security Council adopted resolution 1403 (2002), calling on Israel to implement the Council's previous resolution without delay.

While Council members, the Secretary-General and the heads of the States concerned, including the United States president, understood that the phrase "without delay" meant that Israel should withdraw immediately from the Palestinian territories, Sharon had his own interpretation of the resolution. He announced that he would accelerate the invasion and ordered his forces to finish their operations in the territories in fulfilment of his objectives and in clear defiance of the resolution. The time has come for the Council to put an end to Israel's disregard for Council resolutions. It should force Israel to implement them.

The humanitarian tragedy of the Palestinian civilians is deepening. The aggression against the defenceless Palestinian people is escalating. Humanitarian organizations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, medical and humanitarian personnel, ambulances, and the press are being prevented from reaching the Palestinians, in clear violation of all international norms and laws, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention. Despite Israel's media blackout on the massacres it has carried out against the Palestinian people, it has become clear that its actions in many Palestinian towns and villages, including Nablus and Jenin, are war crimes.

In commenting on some statements made yesterday, the delegation of Lebanon would like to put some facts before the Council, which are as follows.

First, the Security Council, in 1978, adopted resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) against Israel in view of its invasion of the territories of Lebanon, contradicting all international laws and norms, including the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Secondly, the Government of Lebanon has reaffirmed its respect for the Blue Line and has explicitly declared that it has no intention of escalating the conflict or opening a new front. Accordingly, Lebanese forces have detained some out-of-control elements responsible for certain incidents near the border, and have referred them to military courts for legal prosecution. In that context, Lebanon reserves its right to liberate its territories in the occupied Shebaa farms using all possible means.

Thirdly, Lebanon has made a formal apology and expressed its regrets at the highest level to the United Nations and the members of the Security Council for the tragic event in which four United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) personnel were involved in southern Lebanon. We have committed ourselves to do everything possible to prevent the recurrence of such an event, and have decided to refer all those responsible to Lebanese justice for legal prosecution. Lebanon values the role that UNIFIL has played in southern Lebanon and highly appreciates the sacrifices it has made since 1978. We value that role out of our concern for peace and security and for our innocent civilians, who are constantly threatened by Israeli forces, even after the occupation. We have resolved to value that role out of respect for the partnership we have worked so hard to develop with the United Nations peacekeeping force since 1978.

Lastly, the party that should be considered responsible for the current escalation of the conflict is Israel, which has, since May 2000, deliberately and repeatedly violated Lebanon's sovereignty on land, in the air and on the sea. Israel has even bombed some liberated villages in Lebanon, using 155-millimetre-calibre howitzer cannons.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Republic of Korea, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): First of all, let me thank you, Mr. President, for reconvening this open debate on the situation in the Middle East.

The Republic of Korea is deeply concerned about the continuing escalation of violence in the Middle East. We are particularly distressed by the humanitarian situation in the region, and we urge the parties concerned to respect international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of civilians as well as the safety of international humanitarian workers.

The Government of the Republic of Korea has firmly opposed any form of violence that jeopardizes efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region. We share the view of all other members of the international community that violence cannot be a solution to the current situation. It is only through political dialogue and negotiations that the two parties can achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East.

In that regard, my Government gives its unreserved support to Security Council resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), calling for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities. We also welcome the Tenet plan and the Mitchell report recommendations as an effective framework for bringing peace to the region. The Republic of Korea believes that those initiatives should be put into practice promptly.

In that context, we hope that the visit of United States Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region will lead to a ceasefire and meaningful negotiations. At the same time, we commend the ongoing efforts by the international community for peace, in particular those of the "quartet" of international envoys.

The Government of the Republic of Korea believes that the peace process between Israel and Palestine is of critical importance to the peace and stability of the region and to the world as a whole. The potential spread of the conflict to other areas is a matter of grave concern. In particular, we are greatly disturbed by the recent eruption of violence along the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon.

We join the international community in calling upon both parties to take their differences to the negotiating table for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, in compliance with the Security Council's resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Nepal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): I would like to start by expressing my delegation's immense pleasure at seeing you, Sir, preside over the deliberations of the Security Council for the month of April. I wish you success and assure you of my delegation's full support in your work.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made in the Security Council on 3 April by Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa in his capacity as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Middle East has been boiling up in violence for the past several months. The violence has further escalated and the situation further deteriorated in the past week after the reoccupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by the Israeli security forces. This cycle of violence has caused a colossal loss of precious lives, Israeli and Palestinian alike, and is about to destroy the very foundations on which a long-term and lasting peace could be erected in the region.

There is simply no moral basis to justify the killing of innocent people, regardless of who does it or how it is done. The use of force has not produced a durable peace in the Middle East. It never will. The relative calm after the Oslo process began did not lead to a comprehensive peace, either. We now know that a ceasefire and calm must be accompanied by a political process that should fulfil the Palestinian aspiration for a politically and economically viable State and the Israeli aspiration for security. Only this will bring a comprehensive peace to the Middle East.

Left to their own devices, Israel and Palestine do not appear to have the necessary political will to find a negotiated settlement to the crisis. The international community must come to their assistance. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) provide the basis for resolving the acute conflict in the Middle East and the landmark resolution 1397 (2002) envisions the end goals for both sides. But before we begin to focus on the long-term solution to the Middle East problem, Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) must be implemented and Israel must immediately withdraw from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Once that objective is achieved, both sides must come to the negotiating table to find a comprehensive solution without further delay. If necessary, the Security Council must take appropriate measures to implement those resolutions.

Evidently, the parties themselves will have to agree to find a comprehensive peace and stability in the region. The international community's constructive and active involvement, however, will be critical to achieving that goal. In this context, we welcome the determination of the United States Administration to fully engage itself in helping to resolve this painful crisis.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the representative of Nepal for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Thayeb (Indonesia): Since the Security Council held its open-ended debate just a few days ago, the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories has significantly worsened, despite the fact that the Council has recently adopted important resolutions. Can there be light at the end of the tunnel as we witness with deepening dismay the unfolding carnage wrought on the Palestinian people and their territories?

As mandated by the Charter, the Council's primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security. Therefore, it must remain steadfast by insisting on the full and swift implementation of its resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), respectively. The fact that these resolutions remain unimplemented is a cause of profound concern to my delegation as more and more innocent civilians continue to be killed and maimed each passing day, due

to the expanding military aggression of the occupying Power. Moreover, it is appalling and beyond comprehension that thousands of innocent civilians should be denied the most basic necessities of food and medical supplies as they and their leader, President Yasser Arafat, remain under siege.

Such intolerable action is unjustifiable and against international humanitarian law, basic human rights and the norms by which civilized nations live. It brings to the forefront the question of the accountability and credibility of the Council's actions regarding the less grievous circumstances of other questions on its agenda.

My delegation strongly believes that the Security Council must seize this opportunity and discharge its given mandate on the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine. This should entail, amongst other things, the urgent deployment of an international security force to protect the civilians as a matter of priority and to bring peace and normalcy to these war-torn territories.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Philippines. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): It is my pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over this emergency meeting of the Security Council to address urgently the continuing violence and deteriorating situation in the Middle East.

The gravity of the situation has prompted the Security Council recently to issue three resolutions: 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002), calling for immediate implementation of 1402 (2002) without delay. We support those resolutions and urge their immediate and full implementation.

My delegation participates today not just to convey our deep concern over the escalating violence in the region, but also to demonstrate our commitment to the pursuit of a just and enduring peace. In this regard, my delegation and Government fully support all ongoing efforts towards this end, including the direct engagement of the United States. No military solution can resolve this crisis. Only a political solution can have any chance of success in overcoming it. We are also deeply concerned with the growing humanitarian emergency in the occupied territories.

The international community has declared and exhibited its readiness to assist in reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting peace and security in the region. Thus, my delegation welcomes the window of opportunity for sustained and lasting peace offered by the proposal for a third-party monitoring mechanism. Yesterday's debate clearly indicated the international community's support for such a mechanism. We believe that this proposal should be vigorously pursued.

The ingredients of peace are in place. The Mitchell and Tenet plans have been accepted by both sides, and resolutions 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) have set the stage for immediate action. The Arab League Summit made a significant contribution in forging a common position to promote peace in the region. It is an important contribution to the peace process, which my delegation fully welcomes.

We also hope that any forthcoming Security Council resolution on this matter will identify practical measures to effect the ceasefire and set the stage for a lasting and durable peace in the area.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of Israel has asked for the floor, and I now call on him.

Mr. Lancry (Israel): At this time, I would like to make some comments regarding certain statements that have been made so far. I would like to begin by responding to the irresponsible statement made yesterday by the Permanent Observer of Palestine, who referred to Israel's statement, at the outset of this debate, with a series of derogatory and quite frankly undiplomatic terms that have no place in a serious discussion of this nature.

I could not help but be reminded of the use by the Permanent Observer of Palestine of similarly irresponsible language in his letter of 9 January 2002 to the Secretary-General, contained in document S/2002/39, in response to Israel's interception of 50 tons of sophisticated and illegal weapons bound for the Palestinian territories. The Permanent Observer of Palestine called Israel's claims of official Palestinian responsibility for that shipment "absurd" and claimed that no reasonable and sane person could believe it. In the second paragraph, he writes — and I quote from the official text:

> "The Israeli story defies logic and any common sense. No sane person could imagine this quantity of weapons to be successfully smuggled into Gaza through the many serious barriers, including the Israeli naval siege, irrespective of any talks of floating devices and the like. Neither could any sane person imagine the possible use of weapons such as Katyusha rockets against Israel from a place such as Gaza, without catastrophic results. Furthermore, no sane person can imagine in the circumstances this sort of 'military cooperation' between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Palestinian Authority, which have both denied any involvement."

Yet we all know now that responsibility for the weapons about the *Karin A* ship rises to the highest echelons of the Palestinian Authority, even to the Chairman himself. Clearly, Israel's allegations at the time were not quite as absurd as the Permanent Observer of Palestine would have had us believe.

We are in a similar situation today. Israel has come into possession of a substantial quantity of documentary proof that support and financing for terrorist operations have been supplied by the Palestinian Authority and by Chairman Arafat himself. These are the facts. They are known to all. They cannot be ignored or dismissed by theatrical rhetoric.

I will be sending a letter in this regard to the Secretary-General shortly. I have no doubt that in the coming days, we will see that Israel's claims of official Palestinian complicity in the murder of innocent Israelis is not as "silly" or "stupid" or "absurd" as the Permanent Observer of Palestine now claims.

It is unfortunate, but it appears as if the duplicity for which Chairman Arafat is now so well known has pervaded much of the Palestinian Authority. Chairman Arafat's duplicity allows him to reach out in peace with one hand, while he incites violence and terror with the other. It allows him to appeal to the highest ideals of the international community, while he consorts with the lowest and most disreputable elements of the Palestinian terrorist campaign. It leads him to arrest terrorists one day and release them through his revolving door the next. It is precisely this duality — this revolving policy towards peace and terrorism — that must be resolved if Israel is able to believe that the Palestinian leadership intends to conduct negotiations in good faith and if we are to conclude a genuine and lasting agreement with our Palestinian neighbours and partners.

I turn now to statements made by other representatives, to which we are always extremely attentive. We were dismayed, however, by the excessively one-sided statement made yesterday by the representative of Mauritius, who turned a completely blind eye to the practices of Palestinian terrorists. In a seemingly Manichaean view, it appears that there is one party that is totally guilty and one that is totally innocent. Clearly, Mauritius does not find Palestinian suicide bombings that have claimed hundreds of innocent human lives since the beginning of the Oslo process to be very impressive. Nor did Mauritius think to assess this inhuman practice in terms of international humanitarian law.

We do believe, however, that statements of members of the Council which stipulated that the demand for Israeli withdrawal does not mean an acceptance of Palestinian suicide bombing were a far more accurate reflection of the situation in the region. As members will by now know, Israeli troops have withdrawn from the Palestinian cities of Tulkarm and Qalqiliya, while there is no indication of any Palestinian willingness to implement their obligations under resolution 1402 (2002) in a reciprocal fashion. Yet, some Member States still chose to present a one-dimensional reading of resolution 1402 (2002), feeling no compulsion, out of a basic sense of fairness, to call for a concomitant Palestinian implementation of Security Council resolutions.

I would also like to respond to allegations that the deaths incurred on the Palestinian side were mostly Palestinian civilians. I cannot help but wonder at the source of this information. Such a claim can be credibly made only if one considers armed Palestinians as civilians, a consideration that clearly runs counter to the provisions of international law. I reiterate that claims regarding large-scale Palestinian civilian casualties are completely unsubstantiated. The fact is that Israeli soldiers are under strict orders to avoid causing harm to civilians and to engage only against armed Palestinians.

I should also like to express my total rejection of remarks from speakers that have equated Israeli practices with some of the most reprehensible deeds of the Nazis. Such analogies are absolutely indefensible and offensive. Can anyone accept a parallel between

the genocide of 6 million Jews and the Israeli campaign against terror? Is this kind of repulsive analogy a part of legitimate debate in the Security Council? Even Israel's harshest critics, if they are honest and decent, do not level accusations of this type.

If there is any factor in the modern Middle East whose practices resemble such ideologies, who demonstrate a total disregard for humanity, who are obsessed with the murder of innocent men, women and children and who make no distinctions among the targets of their rage, it is the Palestinian suicide bombers. Among their victims have been survivors of the Holocaust, who escaped Hitler's campaign of mass murder, rebuilt their lives in the State of Israel and fell victim to the spiritual progeny of these ideologies.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Permanent Observer of Palestine has asked for the floor, and I now call on him.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine): Yesterday, after my final statement, the Israeli representative said,

> "I regret the tone and content of the statement just made by the Palestinian Observer. In view of the fact that the statement was well prepared, I particularly regret the use of terms such as "silly" and "stupid". I believe that we should conduct the business of this important body in a parliamentary manner. The terms he used are not in line with the parliamentary manner." (*S/PV.4510, p. 26*)

Since that time, several ambassadors have asked me outside this Chamber why I had described the Israeli representative as silly and stupid. Others asked why I described the Israeli statement as silly and stupid. Today, of course, we heard another statement from the Israeli representative, describing our statement as irresponsible and using words such as "derogatory", "no class", et cetera. Although relatively minor, this is just another perfect example of the way many Israeli officials are conducting their business. They try to catch something out of context, make a lie out of it and then wage their campaign. Most probably it will work.

What I said yesterday was the following:

> "A while ago, we listened to the statement made by the Israeli representative, which was indeed an absurd and unfortunate one. The statement basically amounted to an attack on President Yasser Arafat and contained silly, stupid and unsubstantiated allegations that cannot be believed." (ibid., *p. 25)*

So "silly" and "stupid" were not directed at the statement and were definitely not directed at any person. They were practically an understatement about silly, stupid, derogatory, hostile, unsubstantiated — and you can add dozens of other negative adjectives — allegations that have only one aim: to undermine the Palestinian Authority and, specifically, its President, and to contribute to the campaign against them.

The Israeli representative then proceeded today to speak about a letter we sent with regard to another unsubstantiated allegation on the smuggling of an arms shipment by ship. Let me repeat clearly here that the Palestinian Authority and President Yasser Arafat have no involvement whatsoever with that story. However, we noted the presence of a Palestinian captain; we also took note of the involvement of a very few Palestinian officials in this story. As such, we recognize that there absolutely is a certain degree of responsibility that needs to be carried out and that an investigation has to take place.

However, we remain convinced that the Israeli story makes no sense. We stand firmly behind what we said in our letter to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/39). No such shipment was possible. No sane person would have conceived such a thing. And no, Katyushas could not be used in Gaza. The proof of this is that after all the Israeli savagery that we have seen in the last 10 days, no weapons other than rifles were used against the invaders. That is further proof that everything said by the Israeli side on the Palestinian smuggling of weapons was just a lie.

The Israeli representative — by the way, I am using the term "Israeli representative" intentionally in response to the inability of the Israeli side to use the correct and proper designation when he refers to me, that is, the Permanent Observer of Palestine; his inability to utter the word "Palestine" is unfortunate — goes on and chooses to attack the Permanent Representative of Mauritius. I am not going to get into this, but, to tell you the truth, it is very difficult to resist the feeling that a choice was made to serve certain political purposes, that there is a member of the Security Council here and that maybe that member is playing a certain role. So why not try another round of

the usual intimidation against individuals. We hope such intimidation will not work. What was said by the Permanent Representative of Mauritius was no different from what was said by at least 30 other speakers. That is another indication of why he was chosen.

The Israeli representative then goes on and refers to the withdrawal from Qalqiliya and Tulkarm. Let me clarify that the so-called withdrawal from Qalqiliya and Tulkarm is taking place while the Israeli occupying forces continue to surround both cities, keeping a very solid and, indeed, hermetic closure on both. At the same time the Israeli military attack continues and escalates. Israeli occupying forces today reoccupied the town of Dura, near Al-Khalil. The Israeli occupying forces are escalating their attacks in Jenin and Nablus, probably leading to a new Sabra and Shatila in the refugee camps in Jenin.

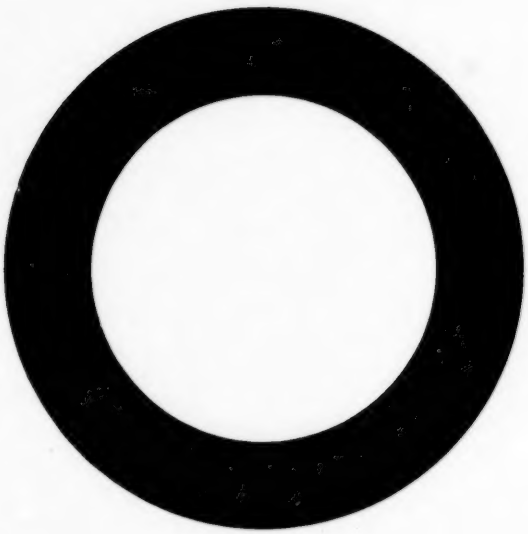
In another glaring example of the same Israeli tactics, the Israeli representative accused many of us of committing a huge sin by daring to compare, on the one hand, what happened to the Jews in Europe, through the terrible Holocaust, to what has been said about what the Israelis have been doing, on the other hand. This, again, is not true. The Permanent Observer of Palestine did not say that what the Israelis are committing against the Palestinian people now is tantamount to the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews in Europe. What we said was clear, that what is happening now in the Palestinian cities, what is being committed by the Israeli army in those cities, has caused a situation which, yes, is tantamount to European cities under the occupation of Nazi German armies.

We stand by what we said; we believe that it is correct. But it is completely different from what was alleged by the Israeli representative. What the Israeli army has been doing against our people does not differ in many aspects from what the Nazi German armies did in many European cities and against their inhabitants.

This is a fact, a terrible fact, which I hope will be courageously faced by the Israeli people. Facing it is the first step towards correcting it, towards a different kind of behaviour, one which could, hopefully, lead to peaceful coexistence between the two sides.

The President *(spoke in Russian)*: I have no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 2.10 p.m.



United Nations S/PV.4511

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4511th meeting

Wednesday, 10 April 2002, 7.35 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-32510 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 7.35 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Israel, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Jacob (Israel) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 10 April 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2002/371, and which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in the meeting of the Security Council to be held today, Wednesday, 10 April 2002, regarding the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem."

I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council supports the Joint Statement (S/2002/369) issued in Madrid on 10 April 2002 by the Secretary-General, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Secretary of State of the United States, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain and High Representative for the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy, which is annexed to this statement, as transmitted to the Security Council by the Secretary-General. The Council calls upon the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and all States in the region to cooperate with the efforts to achieve the goals set out in the Joint Statement and insists on the immediate implementation of resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002)."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2002/9.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.40 p.m.